

THE
CHRISTIANS
PATTERN;
OR
A DIVINE TREATISE
of the
IMITATION OF CHRIST.

Written Originally in Latine, by
THOMAS of KEMPIS,
above 200. Years since.

With a P R E F A C E
CONTAINING,

An Account of the *Worth and Usefulness*
of this *Treatise*.

Some Directions, for the better reading of *This* or
any other Spirituall *Book*; and for the at-
tainment of Divine Knowledge.

An Account of the *former* English Translati-
ons, and of *this* Edition.

Wherein the English is brought to a near Con-
formity to the Author's Latine.

L O N D O N,
Printed by R. Daniel, and are to be sold by John
Clark, at Mercers Chappel in Cheap-side. 1657.



IX. ¹²¹ ~~210~~

THE
CHRISTIANS
PATTERN;
OR
A DIVINE TREATISE
of the
IMITATION OF CHRIST.

Written Originally in Latine, by
THOMAS of KEMPIS,
above 200. Years since.

With a P R E F A C E
CONTAINING,

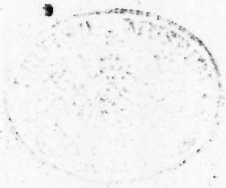
An Account of the *Worth and Usefulness*
of this *Treatise*.

Some Directions, for the better reading of *This* or
any other Spirituall *Book*; and for the at-
tainment of Divine Knowledge.

An Account of the *former* English Translati-
ons, and of *this* Edition.

Wherein the English is brought to a near Con-
formity to the Author's Latine.

L O N D O N,
Printed by R. Daniel, and are to be sold by John
Clark, at Mercers Chappel in Cheap-side. 1657.



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LIBRARY



To the
R E A D E R.

Amongst the many Considerations which clearly evince the great Worth and speciall Excellencies of this divine Treatise, such as These would not be unremembered.

That it hath been translated into very many languages, viz. Greek, Italian, French, Spanish, Dutch, English, &c. Some Travellers affirm they have seen it also in the Turkish language. And in some of these languages, as well as in the Latine in which originally it was written, it hath been very often printed; Scarce hath any other Practicall and Devotionall Discourse been published oftener; And that with so generall an approbation and acceptance; This golden Manual having had the singular happinesse and privilege to be kindly entertain'd by Christians of different denominations, Romanists, and Contra-Romanists whether those of Luthers, or those of Calvin's way.

Amongst the Lutherans, or rather the Reformers of the Lutherans, it hath been always highly esteemed by the Followers (if I may so call them)

To the Reader.

them) of John Arndt, sometimes Surerintendent of Luneburgh, another Salvian in his generation; whose businesse it was to convince men of their unchristian spirits and lives, and to awaken them to the minding of the true Christianity in life and power; that so they might not place the Kingdome of God in meats and drinks, in meere Opinions and outward observances, in a Speculative and Notionall Christianity, an unfruitfull Faith, a dry forme of Knowledge and Godlinesse: but might make it their great care to become really better, a people reformed in deed and truth, to excell and outshine others in every grace and virtue, to shew forth the power of Christ's death and resurrection within them, to crucify the old man, that the body of sin might be destroy'd, and that they might rise up to a new life, the holy, harmlesse, sweet and humble life of Christ; and that by living soberly, righteously and godlily in this present world they might adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, which is by the Apostle styl'd The doctrine, or, the truth, after Godliness. To such purposes and respects of truest charity and pity to the good & spirituall interest of Soules were the Writings of this faithfull Servant of God designed; yet such plain and sincere dealing met (as it is the lot of good Micaiahs) with great oppositions and censurings, but how unjustly and undeservedly hath been largely discovered by others; for me to travell in this Argument would be too great a Digression.

Amongst those of Calvin's way (to omit others)

To the Reader.

others) G. Voetius Professor at Utrecht, having in his Biolotheca studiosi Theologiæ commended some Practicall books, he addes ---- ante omnes Thomæ à Kempis Imitationem Christi. Not much unlike to Voetius his ante omnes is that of the Italian Translator in his Preface to the Reader, viz. that amongst the many Spirituall books which are extant, this Treatise ought to be accounted o il primo, o tra' primi, either the Chief, or amongst the Chief; and that this is not his private judgement, but the common sense & esteeme of all those that have gusto di cose spirituali, such as have (not a meer outward, naturall & speculative knowledge, but) an inward divine sense, a right perception, a true tast and relish of spirituall things.

But to passe by all other Considerations, that which doth fully speak the true Worth and Excellency of this Treatise, is the main Designe and Scope, the Matter and Argument of the Book, being indeed the very same with the Intendment & Designe of the Gospel, the Scope and End of Christianity, which in short is The being transformed into the Image of Christ, or, in our Author's language, the Imitation or Following of Christ in Humility, Patience, Benignity and Goodness, entire Self-resignation to the will of God, &c. In these and the like particulars doth the Author place our Resemblance of Christ, which yet are not here spoken to in a formal Method, but are scattered through this Treatise, yet so as to be easily observed by a serious Reader.

Now there is nothing more precious, more
9 3 dear

To the Reader.

dear to God then his own Image, his own Life from the which Wicked men are said to be estranged, Ephes. 4. And there is nothing higher, nothing more excellent then the Participation of the Divine Nature, then the Resemblance of God who is the first and Supreme Excellency, then the Imitation of Christ who is the highest, the most perfect and lovely Pattern and Idea of all purity and holinesse. Besides there is nothing more essentiall to the constituting of a true Christian, then the denying of himself, the taking up of his Crosse, and following of Christ.

This is a most true and faithfull saying, though it be *σκληρὸς λόγος*, an hard saying and unpleasing doctrine to many specious Christians, who would indeed be advantaged by the death of Christ, but would not be disturbed by the indispensable necessity of living his life: nor would they be planted in the likenesse of his death in their dying to sinne and the life of the world, in crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts, so as they should not so much live, as Christ live in them, and will his own will in them. There is now throughout the Christian world much discoursing and much disputing concerning Christ, but where is the so walking even as he walked! there is much naming of the name of Christ, (and I think never more) but how little is there of the departing from all iniquity, either the more grosse and notorious, or the more close and spirituall iniquity? there are very many that are rather for saying Lord, Lord, then for doing his will. Amongst the divided Churches

To the Reader:

Life in Christendome there be different Sects and Parties that say, Lo here is Christ, and Lo there is Christ; and each of these is very ready to reprobate and anathematize all others, very forward to unchristian and unsaint all that are not of their mode and are not conformed to their likeness in every opinion and practise, though those whom they condemn may be conformed to the likeness of Christ in righteousness and true holiness; and withall each of them is very ready to express that vain-glorious and contracted spirit of the Jewes who would engrosse all Messias unto themselves, and herein they pride and boast themselves: whereas for all their confidence and clamour [Lo here is Christ] there is onely is Christ indeed, where the life of Iesus is manifested; Christ dwells not there where he is but named and talkt on, but where he is believed on, obeyed and followed.

Having given this brief intimation of the Summ and Substance of this Treatise, it would not be unmention'd, That though the generall scope and drift of this Book be the transcribing of so glorious a Pattern as is the Life of Christ, God manifest in the flesh; And though the Titles of some Chapters may seem to respect some particular Doctrines in Religion which are of another importance. yet all along in this Treatise there are to be found the seeds and principles of the most necessary and Practicall Truths, together with many inward and experimentall discoveries of the Kingdome of God in us, and the Process of Regeneration: so that a serious

To the Reader.

Christian may meet with that which will be very proper and suitable to him to consider and make use of, in the severall exercises of his Christian warfare, in the severall states and tempers he may be in, the many varieties of tentations and difficulties he is to pass through, while he is in the wilderness, and before he enters into the rest of God. The truth of this is faithfully witnessed to by many religious and holy Soules, who have profest that in the reading of this Spirituall Book they have found that which hath been (through the goodnesse of God) very profitable to direct and instruct, to revive and comfort, to strengthen and establish them; in a word, seasonably and fully to minister to the severall needs and exigencies of their present state and condition.

But it is also to be remembred, That the great practicall Truths of Religion, the Mysteries of the inward Kingdome of God, are best discerned by such Readers as are sincerely religious, such as have in some measure read the same things in their own soules, and accordingly derive their knowledge of them rather de venis experientiae, then de commentariis, as Savanarola (a Christian of great experience and holiness) doth phrase it: such as by doing the will of God, know his doctrine; such as by living the life of Christ, by following his steps, by suffering the Will of God to rule in them as it did in Christ Jesus, have attained to the knowing of God *κατὰ δυνάμιν*, as they ought to know. This is that Scientia sapida & affectiva, that inward, practicall,

that

To the Reader.

that savoury, experimental, feeling knowledge, which is frequently commended by our Author, who hath in severall places of this Treatise scattered many usefull Directions and Rules for the attainment of this more excellent way of knowing those Truths which concern the truly Christian life and practise.

As for any other kind of Readers, it is no wonder if they be of another sense, if they see no form or comeliness in this Treatise of the Life of Christ, as those of the like spirit saw no beauty in Christ, when he lived on earth, that they should desire him, as the Prophet Esay complain's. It will be no wonder if they lessen and despise it, because the great Practicall Truths so frequently prest here and insisted on [such as, self-mortification, self-denyall, a being crucified to the world, a purifying our selves as God is pure; a denudation, putting off and a renunciation of self-will; hearty and universal obedience; entire self-resignation &c.] are doctrines very grievous and troublesome to them, as being contrary to their corrupt ends and interests, their self-love, their love of the world and the things thereof, in which that they are deeply immerst is very plain to the discerning Christian. Such doctrines are a reproof to such spirituall Pharisees, and discover their being short of the inward Kingdome of God and the true power of Godlinesse; these men are unwilling to be religious and to purchase the Pearl of great price at such a rate as the parting with all for it: They are for a more easy & cheap religion, which costs them little but bodily exercise,

To the Reader,

cise, lesse then the plucking out of their right eyes and cutting off of their right hands, their parting with their most dear and (as they think) convenient sinnes; lesse then the subduing of their passions and inordinate affections to the which it is manifest that they are enslaved; lesse then the entire observance of those most excellent (though most neglected) Lawes and Rules of holy life delivered by our Saviour in his sermon on the Mount, Matth. 5. 6. 7 chapters.

Nor is there any thing in this Treatise to please the wanton curiosity and pride of vain-spirited Readers; here are none of the great swelling words of vanity, no high-soaring language, no airy speculations, no cloudy (yet empty and insignificant) expressions, nothing of affectation, no canting in Divinity, to gratify the vain Enthusiasts: and therefore an unprejudiced Christian that seriously reads this book, may justly wonder at some Writers who have at least inconsiderately numbred the Author thereof, Thomas à Kempis, amongst the Enthusiastick transgressors; whereas if any of that way should chance to commend this Treatise, and thereby serve themselves, yet there is nothing in it that tends to the either begetting or feeding of that spiritual distemper: but the main scope and business of the Author is to oblige Christians to sobriety and humbleness of mind, to the simplicity of the life of Christ. Nor are there to be found here any rapturous expressions, but such as may be observed in other serious Christians, when they have the more full and inward Communion with God,

To the Reader.

right God, and most affectionately cleave to him. And
their when such divinely enamour'd soules express most
ink of the Spirit of Love, yet is not this Spirit of Love
their separated from the Spirit of sobriety or a sound
ch in mind, as the Apostle doth phrase it, 2. Tim. 1.

then Nor is there anything here to gratify such as
blem are of a flashy, light, and trifling spirit. Here is
les of no luxuriancy of phansy, no frothy wit, no humo-
mon rous expressions, no painted or gay language, no-
thing that is flaunting and gawdy, none of those
se to Oculiferias, (as Seneca speaks of the Stoicall writ-
spi-tings) with which some childish minds are great-
ling ly enamour'd to their own hurt; as silly Larks
are mightily taken with some glistening pieces of
no glasse in the fields, and at length play themselves
in- into the Fowlers net. Here is no such stuffe as is
ion, apt to take those who in trath are but παιδια τῶν
En-οπίων children in Understanding: and unable
pri- to discern what is most serious and substantiall,
tly & makes for the noblest accomplishment of their
on- minds, and for their spirituall and eternall well-
as fare. A serious and wise Christian cannot but
es- disregard the weaknesse of these strong lines as
ce they call them, he cannot but nauseate such kind
ve of Theologicall Discourses (come they either
ds from the Presse or from the Pulpit) which, how-
u- ever they may please the itching eares and tickle
fs the phansies of such as are unacquainted with
ty better things, yet (contrary to what followed upon
be the preaching of the Apostles) never penetrate
e the heart, nor awaken men to such affectionate
y inquiries, Men and Brethren what shall we do?
h and again, What must we do to be saved?

To the Reader,

cise, lesse then the plucking out of their right eyes and cutting off of their right hands, then parting with their most dear and (is they think) convenient sinnes; lesse then the subduing of their passions and inordinate affections to the which it is manifest that they are enslaved; lesse then the entire observance of those most excellent (though most neglected) Lawes and Rules of holy life delivered by our Saviour in his sermon on the Mount, Matth. 5. 6. 7 chapters.

Nor is there any thing in this Treatise to please the wanton curiosity and pride of vain-spirited Readers; here are none of the great swelling words of vanity, no high-soaring language, no airy speculations, no cloudy (yet empty and insignificant) expressions, nothing of affectation, no canting in Divinity, to gratify the vain Enthusiasts: and therefore an unprejudiced Christian that seriously reads this book, may justly wonder at some Writers who have at least inconsiderately numbred the Author thereof, Thomas à Kempis, amongst the Enthusiastick transgressors; whereas if any of that way should chance to commend this Treatise, and thereby serve themselves, yet there is nothing in it that tends to the either begetting or feeding of that spiritual distemper; but the main scope and business of the Author is to oblige Christians to sobriety and humbleness of mind, to the simplicity of the life of Christ. Nor are there to be found here any rapturous expressions, but such as may be observed in other serious Christians, when they have the more full and inward Communion with God,

To the Reader.

rightly, and most affectionately cleave to him. And when such divinely enamour'd soules express most of the Spirit of Love, yet is not this Spirit of Love separated from the Spirit of sobriety or a sound mind, as the Apostle doth phrase it, 2. Tim. I.

Nor is there anything here to gratify such as are of a flashy, light, and trifling spirit. Here is no luxuriancy of phansy, no frothy wit, no humorous expressions, no painted or gay language, nothing that is flaunting and gawdy, none of those Oculiterias, (as Seneca speaks of the Stoicall writings) with which some childish minds are greatly enamour'd to their own hurt; as silly Larks are mightily taken with some glistening pieces of glasse in the fields, and at length play themselves into the Fowlers net. Here is no such stuffe as is apt to take those who in truth are but *παιδια τῆς οἰκίας* children in Understanding, and unable to discern what is most serious and substantiall, & makes for the noblest accomplishment of their minds, and for their spirituall and eternall wellfare. A serious and wise Christian cannot but disregard the weaknesse of these strong lines as they call them, he cannot but nauseate such kind of Theologicall Discourses (come they either from the Presse or from the Pulpit) which, however they may please the itching eares and tickle the phansies of such as are unacquainted with better things, yet (contrary to what followed upon the preaching of the Apostles) never penetrate the heart, nor awaken men to such affectionate inquiries, Men and Brethren what shall we do? and again, What must we do to be saved?

To the Reader.

Nor is there anything here to gratify those that are all for nice subtilties and distinctions thinne and jejune Theories, that cannot skill at any thing but what comes to them in their Method of Ob. and Sol. with the rest of the Scholastick accustomed contrivements, although what is otherwise expressed may be very rationally, solid, important and cleare to those that are free-spirited and ingenuous. These are they that have learnt to dispute, not to converse, and are more for that kind of Knowledge which puffeth up, then for Charity and divine Love which would edify. They are not for provoking and exciting one another to Love and good works, but rather for provoking to wrath, envy and strife; & accordingly in their converse with others they are ready to spoile any spiritual conference about the most clear, concerning Practicall Truths, by starting some unnecessary doubts and controversies, and thereby changing it to a quarrelsome, impetuous, and wholly unspirituall debate about some speculative matters both uncertain and unnecessary, and not pertaining to life and godlinesse: And now they reign, now they are happy: and being desirous of vain-glory and dominion, are very forward to dogmatize and most magisterially to impose their conceits upon all others, affecting and endeavouring by their darkening counsell with words, by their clogging easy and trivial notions with multiplicity of distinctions which have a shew of wisdom, to be admired for the onely acute and knowing men; and being admired for such by the Many who look onely upon the out-sides of things, they have their reward. But

To the Reader.

But though there be nothing in this Treatise
humour those that are under the power of
these Vanities, yet there is that which is infinite-
ly better then all these, and will be accordingly
valued by the good and honest heart; & that is the
simplicity of the Knowledge and Life of Christ,
for the excellency of which if all those other
things be accounted so much as dross and dung,
they are abundantly honoured.

Hitherto we have spoken of the excellent
usefulness of this Treatise, and of the Qualifi-
cations required in him that would profitably
read this or any other Spirituall Treatise, and of
the necessity of Obedience, in order to the attain-
ment of an Encrease in divine knowledge. And
indeed again and again is the Christian Reader
to be admonished to seek after the best knowledge
of divine things in the way of Obedience and Ex-
perience, carefully to observe the power of di-
vine Truths working and prevailing within him;
and to continue his endeavouring after a real
conformity to the life of Christ, as becomes him
to do that would plene & sapide verba Christi in-
telligere, attain to a more full, savoury and sen-
sible knowledge of Christ, according to our
Author's direction in this Treatise.

Now what we have spoken herein, may be
clearly confirmed from the Example of our Au-
thor himself, who was a serious and diligent
Observer of the Kingdome of God within him,
and speaks of the inward things of Religion, as
one that did carefully mind the power and Ener-
gy of Truth in his own soul.

A-

To the Reader.

Agreeably in this Treatise doth he frequently invite men to the exercise of Meditation, the withdrawing themselves often from the noise and tumults of the World, they might in sweet and still retirements be more free to converse with God and with themselves. The good and advantages which come to a Christian by these introversions into himself, and drawings near to God; (as also the evil and disadvantages which come to a man by his being eagerly engaged in the world, and by pouring out his whole self in these outward things) he mentions in more than a few places of this Book. I shall instance in some few of them, more particularly in such as have some relation to the Author.

The self-recollecting Christian, one seasonably retired, (so as not to neglect any incumbent duty) grows more in all wisdom and spirituall understanding, hath fuller and clearer apprehensions of divine things, and speaks of them with more authority and power, and with more facility, freedome and readinesse. This was verified in our Author, to whom it was not strange to speak of spirituall and heavenly things, and that with the greatest delight and complacence; and therefore if he were desired at any time by some honest-hearted Christians to preach, he was ready after a little retirement to return to them, and to satisfie their spirituall thirst; for he had a living fountain within him, & spake from an inward ground, and the things he spake, were not strange but familiar to him, and known by experience; so that it was not what he
had

To the Reader.

had onely seen with his eyes in the writings of others, or what he had heard with his eares from the discourses of others, but what he had tasted and felt within himself, and what he knew inwardly, he declared to them. And this kind of preaching or speaking about divine things is certainly the best, and most for the honour of Christ, the good of soules, and the triumph of holy Angels who infinitely rejoyce at the conversion of a sinner, when forsaking the vanities and evils of this world (for the whole world lieth in wickednesse) and breaking off from all those beloved sinnes which hitherto had wholly possesst him, and putting off as to his former conversation the old man; he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, and puts on that new man which is created after God in righteousness and true holinesse, not living the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. When a poor sinner thus comes to himself and to God, and therein minds his own good, and does well to his Soul which before he had wrong'd; it is matter of joy and triumph to the good Angels, as of envy and trouble to the Devil and his Angels.

The Christian that communes with God and his own heart, growes as in knowledge, so in Grace and Holinesse, and indeed it will be very hard without this holy retirednesse to keep up Religion in power and vigor. And as he partakes more of holinesse, so doth he partake more of the peaceable fruit of righteousness, and finds more rest unto his soul, then those that are swallowed up either in the cares or in the pleasures of

To the Reader.

of this world; which is the life and condition of the self-seeking worldlings, the crafty Politicians, the Lovers of pleasures more then lovers of God, the ambitious and covetous, who as they are out of the way of true knowledge, and minding earthly things are not the most fit discerners of things heavenly and divine, so also they are out of the way of true peace and rest: for that they may enjoy what they inordinately desire, they are anxious and cumber themselves about many things, rise up early and sit up late, and pierce themselves through with many cares; and when they enjoy it, that which was in the mouth sweet as honey, becomes bitter in the belly, as it is said of the Book, Revelat. 10. The truth of all this our Author was well assured of, as appeared by that noted saying of his, In omnibus requiem quæsi, & nusquam inveni, nisi in *hoerckens ende hoerckens*, that is, as some have endeavoured to imitate the Dutch, in angellis & libellis; intimating hereby, that in all those outward things which the men of this world so greedily long and earnestly contend for, he never found so pure, so clear a contentment, so lasting satisfaction, such secure and full rest, as in retired converse with God and himself, as in meditation, in reading of books, especially that Book of books, the Holy Scripture: in the fair transcribing of which for the good of others, he spent not a little time, nor a little of his strength through his day and night labours, which yet God did mercifully repair and preserve unto a good old age: for he was in the ninety second year of his age, when he

To the Reader.

he dyed, and his eye was not dimme, as it is said of Moses; for all his night-labours either in transcribing the Bible, or writing out his own meditations, his eye-sight failed him not, so that even to the last he never used Spectacles, but continued to be of a sharp and strong sight. This excellent faculty in writing he gained by his great industry and continued practise, when he was young and lived at Daventry, in the house of Florentius who was a burning and shining light, and his Family was a School of Piety, a nursery of Religion to severall young men that lived there in great plainnesse and singlenesse of heart, and for their common maintenance (besides other labours) did transcribe good Books. This is the Character our Author gives of that place of his Education, where he acquir'd his faculty of writing, which (more especially at that time when Printing was either not known, or but in its very infancy) was an excellent Quality, and could not be better employ'd then about the fair copyings out of the Bible, the best of Books, which indeed was both his Counsellor and his Delights, his dearest Delights, to use his own words; --- Scripturæ ---- charissimæ et deliciæ sunt, & erunt, donec dies æternitatis luceat, & umbra mortalitatis inclinetur.

To conclude this Argument, the Christian that can dwell at home and be recollected, is more frequently visited by God, and admitted more inward converse with him. This was eminently exemplified in our Author, who many times as he was discoursing amongst his brethren

To the Reader:

thren and companions of spirituall and heavenly things, (of which he alwayes spake with most pleasure and self-content, as also with the greatest fluency and readinesse) would have an inward powerfull sense of God's approaching to him and speaking to his heart; So that he was enforced modestly to take leave of the company, and excuse himself for his abrupt going away, under the notion of a friends coming to speak with him. And thus being parted from them, he would retire into his closet, that he might vacare Deo, free to converse with God, that he might pour out his inward self before God, and receive the sweet influences of heaven, the out-flowings of the Divine wisdom and goodnesse, God's light and love, into his Soul; For the more a religious Soul empties it self before God in acts of Humility and Love, the more shall it be filled with the fulnesse of God.

Some intimations and specimina of this Humane practise, and the good of it, the Reader may more plainly observe in the third book of this Treatise, where the discourse is carryed on in the form and way of a divinely-affectionate Entertainment between Christ and a recollected Christian. And in this Book especially doth the Author represent a Christian according to the severall tempers and states he may be in, (and in which he himself seems to have been) sometimes in spirituall conflicts, and sometimes in triumphs; sometimes under great tentations and trialls, in a state of fear and discomfort and anxiety, propter ariditatem mentis as he phraseth

To the Reader,

it, because of the driness of his mind and affections, and because of the want of those more sensible feelings of divine sweetness and influence; and other times victorious, more than Conquerour, free and enlarged, bedew'd and overflow'd with holy joyes and delights. Sometimes dark and cold, then enlightened and inflamed. Sometimes in a low and tottering condition, then raised up and established; yet alwayes and in all conditions, and under all these spirituall vicissitudes, he represents a Christian as obliged to be humble and resigned, alwayes poore in spirit, self-abasing, sensible of the necessity of divine assistance, thankfully acknowledging the supplies of grace, and purged from all pride, arrogancy, and self-exalting as to any pretension and conceit of merit in himself; which word meritum or mereri though sometimes it is used by the Author, as of old by the ancient Fathers, yet it is used in a sense far distant from self-glorying. For the clearing of these particulars many passages (if need were) might be observed out of this Third book, as also out of the first and second; of which three Books, what hath been hitherto spoken in reference to this Treatise, is properly to be understood. For as for the Fourth, all in it (except some few passages) relates to the Eucharist, and therefore is of a more particular and restrained concernment, and treats of an Argument more distant from what is intimated by the Title of this Treatise, viz. The Imitation or Following of Christ.

The Remainder of this Preface is to give
992 some

To the Reader.

some account of the English Translations, and this with all convenient brevity.

Such was the constantly acknowledged worth of this Treatise, that it has been very often done into English. To omit what is lesse remarkable, it should not be forgot, that it was betimes translated out of the French Edition into English, and by no meaner a Personage then the Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, mother of king Henry the 7. a Lady of great Devotion and Charity, adorned with good works (which ornament S. Paul represents as that which is infinitely the best, and such as becomes women professing godlinesse) and withall in S. Peters phrase, clothed with humility, as Erasmus observes of her in his Epistles; and in both these [Humility and Charity] a Follower of Christ who was meek and lowly in heart, and who went about doing good. And of her transcribing and copying out of his Example in Beneficence, there are many noble instances in severall places, particularly in Cambridge, where she founded first Christs College, and not being weary in well doing, a little afterwards founded S. Johns, as also a Theological Lecture in that, and in the other University, besides other expressions of her Beneficence there, and in other places; a Beneficence it was of an enlarged nature, such as respected not the outward man, but also the inward, the better part, in providing for the Religious and ingenuous education of men, and the accomplishing of them for publick service.

*In Queen Elizabeth's reign it was translated
into*

To the Reader.

into English and more then once published by Mr. Rogers who dedicated it to the then L. Chancellour Bromley. Concerning which Translation it may be said, (which yet is not said with a designe to disvalue the laudable part of his great pains & labour in that performance) that in very many places it is rather a short Paraphrase then a Translation, nor is it in them the Translation of Thomas of Kempis his Latine, but of Cattellio's Latine.

As for the Author's own Latine, it is significantly expressive of his sense, and is not without it's life and quicknesse; yet is it very homely and plain, as were most especially of the Religious writings in that age; the Latine style not being then so polish'd and restored to it's purity and splendour as it was afterwards by the great industry of some learned men, particularly by the stupendious diligence and unwearied labours of the incomparable Erasmus, whom I the rather mention, because as he was a great Restorer of Ingenuous Learning, so also was he a great Advancer of Practicall Christianity, there being an excellent relish of the most serious Piety all along in his Practicall writings, and (that I may pretermitt his *Methodus veræ Theologiæ*, his Paraphrases upon the New Testament admirable for their clearnesse and spirituality, and his other Practicall Discourses) particularly in his *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, a Book of the like Complexion and Spirit with this of our Author's: And that even his Pleasantnesse in some of his Discourses was designed by him to serve the Interest of what is truly serious, may easily appear

To the Reader.

to those that are not men of prejudiced or contracted spirits. But to return, the Author's Latine being very homely and unpolisht, and therefore the more subject to be neglected by some, who if they could be allured to the minding of the Authors sense, might receive much spirituall good; upon this consideration Castellio was moved to undertake the labour of putting the Author's sense into other Latine, hoping thereby to winne men to the reading of this Book, which for the excellent spirit of Piety contained therein, was very deare and high in his esteem: this his design is best exprest by himself in his Preface to his Translation, *Hunc ego libellum, quia pietatis plenus, non mihi solum, sed & aliis piis multis vilis est, putavi de Latino in Latinum, hoc est, de agrestiore sermone in paulo mundiozem, sed tamen simplicem, esse convertendum: and a little afterwards, Quod Latiniozem feci, causam habui hanc, quod multi Latiniora libentius legunt: & ego homines ad piorum librorum lectionem omni licita ratione alliciendos esse censeo.*

Of latter years the English Editions have been more exact and perfect: those in London seem to have been according to the prints at Paris, except some short differences in a few places in the Three books, and the leaving out of some passages in the Fourth book, (and one passage in the first) which related to some customes and orders, or to some externall rites in the Roman administration of the Eucharist. These as they are omitted in the late London Editions, so also in this. And if we compare the Parisian Editions with

To the Reader.

With the Latine, there will be found some Omissions, not to mention some words which needed not to have been added, besides the interpretations of some phrases which might have been less imperfect: which we choose rather to cover, then now particularly to remember.

Not to speak much of this present Edition (which would be but a poor vaingloriousnesse) the Reader is desired to mind these few things.

That it was desired by some that this translation should be brought to a nearer Conformity to the Author's Latine, then any of the former, and this was desired for the sake of those who (though of good accomplishments, yet) have not had the opportunities or advantages of being acquainted with any other then their native language.

That accordingly it hath been endeavoured generally to keep as close to the Latine, as might be without clouding or perplexing the sense; so that if some words have either now been added, or are continued as being found in the former Versions, for the necessary clearing of the sense; they are for the most part included in these two crotchets [], which in two or three places are omitted, as they are twice or thrice redundant in the Print.

That this Endeavour, of bringing this Edition nearer to the simplicity of the Authors sense and notion in the Latine, and withall of correcting such passages in former Editions as did not only not come near to the words of the Author, but were also too much at a distance from his sense; I

To the Reader.

say, that such an endeavour as this, might the better succeed; severall Latine Editions have been consulted. Those that we met with, were not so ancient as we wisht and endeavoured for; yet in them we observed some (though not very many) differences, and in such places we followed that sense which was most agreeable to the neighbouring words. That there were in the written Copies more then a few mistakes and interpolations, Labyrinthus errorum (that's their word,) is told us by those who had the opportunity of viewing and collating some of the Manuscripts, and with all mention their paines in endeavouring a more correct Edition of the Author's works. And as the Latine Editions, so were also severall English Translations sometimes compared, the best of which were those of a later date; yet in them it was easy to observe some Omissions, and some unnecessary Additions, besides in some places too great an estrangednesse from not onely the Words, but Sense of the Author: the emendation of which things was in part endeavoured in the last English Edition 1654; but, in regard some part of the Book was printed before that assayed, and the Press made hast to finish the rest, nor was there then the opportunity of consulting so many Editions &c, it could not then be carryed on so farre as it is in this present Edition; for the bettering of which it was thought fit to bring more or lesse of the English in every page of the former Editions to a nearer conformity to the Authors words or sense. In some few places where the words were dubious, and where it was uncertain

To the Reader.

betertain whether they were to be taken in a narrow-
been or in a larger sense, care hath been taken to ex-
t press them in the more comprhensive sense : And
et in hath been observed by some Publishers of this
ny) Book, that there are some words, which though
hath now understood in a more limited and deter-
nou- min'd sense, were used by the Author in a more
Co- laxe and generall Notion.

ons, That it is hoped that the English in this Edi-
told tion (plain and without pomp, as is the Author's
ing Latine) is tolerably smooth, facile and perspicu-
th- ous, & not more rugged or ungratefull then in the
more Former, notwithstanding this stricter regard to
d as the words of the Author, as it was by some much
ng- desired; the complying with whose desire ren-
best der'd this undertaking far more troublesome by
em reason of here and there some odd pieces of Latine,
me and by reason of the Author's style generally ve-
too ry close and concise; how troublesome none can
the so well judge as those that shall travell in the like
da- endeavour. Otherwise it would have been a much
in easier (and to some perhaps a more plausible) bu-
rd- nessse to have paraphra'st upon the Author, or
as- with others to have taken the liberty to flourish
st, or descant upon the sense.

ng But the more any Reader hath of a seriously
er- religious Spirit in him, the lesse curious and sol-
n; licitous will he be about either the English or La-
to tine; for when his Mind comes to be deeply im-
of mer'it in the spirituality of the inward sense, when
he he shall once come to converse with the very soul
re of all that Practicall Truth contained in this
n- Treatise; he cannot think it curæ-præteritum
in worth

To the Reader.

worth the while to be a nice Observer of the Body and outward dresse of the style and language. Such a one knowes how to prize this rich Treasure, though brought in an earthen vessell; nor will he disesteem the precious Pearl for the meanness of the shell. To be able to discern & value what is weighty, substantiall, & of good use & importance. *Ἰσχυρὰ καὶ ἀναγκαῖον*, to prove and to approve the things that are more excellent, is the property and privilege of a free and large mind, is an Argument of a clear and sincere Judgement. But to be anxious and keep adoe about Words and Phanxies, or such and such Forms of expressions, is the quality of a childish and narrow spirit, a weak and little mind. Some there be which are so straitned by a principle of Self-love in them, and by their fond regard to their own words and conceits, their *Idola specus*, their particular Mode and way; that the same Truth, which would please their Phansy (for it goes no deeper) if appearing in their own Forme of Words, is presently disregarded if it come to them in another form and dresse.

These were the principall Advertisements which it was thought convenient to mind the Reader of, who is desired to take them along with him in the perusall of this Treatise.

Not to enlarge any further on this Argument I shall onely adde this, That I doubt not but some there are, who, being rich in spirit, full of self-love, and greater in their own eyes then they are in others, will think too undervaluingly of this Treatise, and being of contracted spirits, will be

To the Reader.

judiced against it, they not valuing truth for
self and wheresoever they find it, but onely as
is conveyed to them by such whose persons they
are in admiration because of advantage. But I
am not at all solicitous concerning the men of
this spirit which every where swarme in Christ-
dome; what hath been already spoken, may
serve to check their Pharisaicall temper. I know
there is in this Book both Milk and strong meat:
yet even those Truths that seem least in their
eyes are no such despicable things; but their lives
show that they have great need to be more and
more awaken'd into the serious apprehension and
service of them. That which doth not a little
disturbe them (which yet they are loth to profess)
I plainly this, that there are such Practicall
truths urged here, as are contrary to their cor-
rupt principles & interests, such as ablige them
to that which is grievous to flesh and blood, and
contrary to their love of themselves and the
world: such as would raise them to an inward
and living righteousness far exceeding that spe-
ciall and dead righteousness of the Scribes and
Pharisees: and if these Truths be so common as
they pretend, and easy to be understood in a
speculative way, yet they are hard to be practi-
sed by them, and that's the true reason why they
warrell with them, & take it very ill that their
impotency and shortnesse should thus be discove-
red and reprov'd.

The same Men will also be very apt to think
and speak slightly of the labour and care in this
edition, or any such like undertaking, as if it
were

To the Reader.

were a businesse too low and servile, and will
ready to say with that miserable disciple, *οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ ἡ ἀπώλεια αὐτοῦ*; wherefore is this wast?
if to be thus employ'd, were to lose oleum &
peram, and that herein a man did too much
lect and lessen himself: this is their opinion
censure. But neither am I solicitous about
To me it is a very small thing to be judged
Man's judgement, especially of those who are
ded by self-love, pride and prejudice, and
little acquainted with the Wisdome which
peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of me
cy and good fruits; such who by being more tal
ative and dogmaticall, by a rude eagerneſſe
doting about questions and strifes of words
make a great show and appearance of knowledge
yet of such it is said, that they are proud, know
ing nothing, destitute of the Truth, speaking ev
of the things they know not. These men are
for sitting at Christs right and left hand in
Kingdome, for ease & privileges; and think
much to humble themselves (as our Lord dia)
the forme of a servant for the good of others,
make themselves servants unto all (as S. Pa
dia) that they may gain the more: they are aver
from the labours of Religion in bearing the Yoke
of Christ, striving against the lusts that war
their members, exercising themselves to godl
nesse, abounding more and more in the work of the
Lord: nay they grudge God any service, except
such wherein they may serve themselves. But know
ye vainglorious & blind Pharisees, understand
bruitish among the People, that the yoke of Christ

To the Reader.

a sweet, gracious & gainfull yoke, that there
no victory so glorious as that which is over a
mans self; that godlinesse is profitable unto all
things, and is great gain, so that it is not in vain
serve the Lord; nor is there any service to be
ld mean and low which is done for God; what-
ever is tinctur'd with true respects to a spiri-
tall good, becomes rich & precious: to be but a
beonite, a drawer of water and hewer of wood,
it be for the house of God; to be a door-keeper,
sit at the threshold, abjectus esse, *μαγνησιον*,
such severall renderings there are of the Heb.
מַגְנִישִׁיּוֹן (Psal. 84.) to have but a meaner em-
ployment, or a lower place in the house of God, is
great grace and favour.

But I fear I may seem too unkind to the Rea-
der, in keeping him by so long a Preface from
better things, I mean that Treasure of Spirituall
wisdom hid in the following Treatise. Yet I am
the lesse troubled for the length of it, when I con-
sider that there is nothing in it to gratify any one
sect or party, & that there are some things inti-
mated therein, which are not unconcerning and
pertinent, but very necessary for those of dif-
ferent wayes and perswasions seriously to think
on: And that these might be the more fully and
with more advantage commended to them, I have
taken the liberty thus far to enlarge the Pre-
face.

And now what remains after all this labour
is to add humble and hearty desires to the God
of all grace, the Father of lights, that he would
take away all vailles and remove all prejudices
from

To the Reader.

from the minds and hearts of the Readers; that
he would prepare good and honest hearts for
receiving of those Truths which so mainly
concern Life and Godlinesse: that it may please
him so to prosper what is here written of the
Imitation of Christ, as that they that read, may
be formed into the likenesse of Christ and follow
his steps; that being in the world as He was
the world, and being changed into his image
from glory to glory, They may at last be
with him where he is, and behold the glory which
he hath given him, and so for ever be with the Lord.

A Collection of some places of Scripture
relating to the mind of this
Treatise.

Luke 9. 23.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Crosse dayly, and follow me.

Iohn 14. 6.

I am the way, and the Truth, and the Life.

Philip. 2. 5.

Let the same mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 2. 21.

Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.

1. Iohn 2. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Chap. 3. 7.

Little Children, let no man deceive you; He that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.

Chap. 4. 17.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldnesse at the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world.

Revel. 14. 4.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

2. Cor. 3. 18.

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glasse the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Rom. 13. 14.

Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Ephes.

Ephes. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

But ye have not so learned Christ: If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts: And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness.

S Bernard.

Christum sequendo citius apprehendes quam legendo.

S. Augustine.

Summa religionis Christianæ est imitari eum quem colis.

E R R A T A.

Page 1. line 11. read and. p. 16. l. 10. dele from. p. 28. l. 20. r. them. p. 31. l. 13. r. in. p. 32. l. 9. read fulfilled. p. 181. l. 19. r. not. p. 183 l. 11. r. punishments. p. 191. 26. r. thee. p. 266 A. 11. r. possesse. p. 290. l. 16. for dear read deep.

THE

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAP. I.

*Of the imitation of Christ, and contempt
of all worldly vanities.*

HE that followeth me, walketh not
in darknesse, saith the Lord.
These are the words of Christ;
by which we are admonished,
that we ought to imitate his life and man-
ners, if we will be truly inlightened, and
be delivered from all blindnesse of heart.
Let therefore our chiefeft endeavour be
to meditate upon the life of Iesus Christ.

2. The doctrine of Christ exceedeth all
the doctrines of holy men; an he that
hath the Spirit, will find therein an hid-
den Manna. But it falleth out, that many,
who often hear the Gospel of Christ, are
yet but litle affected, because they are void
of the spirit of Christ. But whosoever
will fully and feelingly understand the
words of Christ, must endeavour
to conform his life wholly to [the life
of] Christ.

3. What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity? High words surely make a man neither holy nor just, but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God. I had rather feel Compunction, then understand the definition thereof. If thou didst know the whole Bible, and the sayings of all the Philosophers by heart, what would all that profit thee without the love of God and without grace? Vanity of vanities and all is vanity, but to love God, and to serve him onely. This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the kingdome of heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to seek after perishing riches, and to trust in them. It is also vanity to hunt after honours, and to climbe to high degree. It is vanity to follow the desires of the flesh, and to labour for that, for which thou maist afterwards suffer more grievous punishment. Vanity it is to wish to live long, and to be carelesse to live well. It is vanity to mind onely this present life, and not to

for

foresee those things which are to come. It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither, where everlasting joy is permanent.

5. Call often to mind that proverb, *That the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of visible things, and to turn thy self to the invisible. For they that follow their sensuality, do stain their own consciences, and lose the favour of God.

C H A P. II.

Of the humble conceit of our selves.

ALL men naturally desire to know: but what availeth knowledge without the fear of God? Surely, an humble husbandman that serveth God, is better than a proud Philosopher that neglecting himself laboureth to understand the course of the heavens. Who so knoweth himself well, groweth more meane in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praises of men. If I understood all things

in the world, and were not in charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judge me according to my deeds?

2. Cease from an inordinate desire of knowing, for therein is much distraction and deceit. The learned are willing to seem so to others, and to be accounted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soul: and he is very unwise, that is intent upon other things then those that may avail him for the welfare of his soul. Many words do not satisfy the soule; but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conscience giveth great assurance in the sight of God.

3. How much the more thou knowest and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unless thou be also more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science [which thou knowest] but rather let the knowledge given thee make thee more humble and cautious. If thou thin

keest that thou understandest and knowest much ; know also that there be many things more which thou knowest not. Affect not to be over-wise , but rather acknowledge thine own ignorance. Why wilt thou preferre thy self before others, sith there be many more learned and skillfull in the Scripture then thou ? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitablie ; desire to be unknown, and to be little esteemed of [by man.]

4. The highest and most profitable reading is the true knowledge and consideration of our selves. It is great wisdom and perfection to esteem nothing of our selves, and to think alwayes well and highly of others. If thou shouldst see another openly sinne , or commit some hainous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteem the better of thy self: for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remain in good estate. We are all frail, but thou oughtest to esteem none more frail then thy self.

in the world, and were not in charity what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judge me according to my deeds?

2. Cease from an inordinate desire of knowing, for therein is much distraction and deceit. The learned are willing to seem so to others, and to be accounted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soul: and he is very unwise, that is intent upon other things then those that may avail him for the welfare of his soul. Many words do not satisfie the soule; but good life comforteth the mind, and pure conscience giveth great assurance in the sight of God.

3. How much the more thou knowest and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unless thy life be also more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science [which thou knowest] but rather let the knowledge given thee make thee more humble and cautious. If thou thinkest

keest that thou understandest and knowest much ; know also that there be many things more which thou knowest not. Affect not to be over-wise , but rather acknowledge thine own ignorance. Why wilt thou preferre thy self before others, sith there be many more learned and skilfull in the Scripture then thou ? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitablie ; desire to be unknown, and to be little esteemed of [by man.]

4. The highest and most profitable reading is the true knowledge and consideration of our selves. It is great wisdom and perfection to esteem nothing of our selves, and to think alwayes well and highly of others. If thou shouldst see another openly sinne , or commit some hainous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteem the better of thy self: for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remain in good estate. We are all frail, but thou oughtest to esteem none more frail then thy self.

C H A P. III.

Of the doctrine of Truth.

HAppy is he whom Truth by it self doth teach, not by figures and words that passe away; but as it is in it self. Our own opinion & our own sense do often deceive us, and it discerns little. What availeth it to cavill [and dispute] about dark and hidden things; whereas for being ignorant of them we shall not be so much as reprov'd at the day of judgement? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and necessary, and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtfull: we have eyes and see not.

2. And what have we to do with *Genus* and *Species* [the dry notions of Logicians?] He to whom the Eternall Word speaketh, is delivered from a world of unnecessary conceptions. From that one Word are all things, and all speak that one: and this is the Beginning, which also speaketh unto us. No man without that [Word] understandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, he
who

who reduceth all things to one, and seeth all things in one; may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God, who art the Truth, make me one with thee in everlasting charity. It is tedious to me often to reade and hear many things: in thee is all that I would have and can desire. Let all Doctours hold their peace; let all creatures be silent in thy sight: speak thou alone unto me.

3. How much the more one is united within himself, and becometh inwardly simple [and pure,] so much the more and higher things doth he understand without labour: for that he receiveth intellectual light from above. A pure, sincere, and stable spirit is not distracted, [though it be employed] in many works: for that it works all to the honour of God, and inwardly being still and quiet, seekes not it self in any thing it doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more then the unmortified affections of thine own heart? A good and godly man first of all disposeth within himself those things which he is outwardly to act: neither do they draw

him to the desires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth them according to the prescript of right reason. Who hath a greater combat, then he that laboureth to overcome himself? This ought to be our endeavour, to conquer our selves, and daily to wax stronger and to make a further growth in holiness.

4. All perfection in this life hath some imperfection mixt with it: and no knowledge of ours is without some darknesse. An humble knowledge of thy self is a surer way to God, then a deep search after learning: yet learning is not to be blamed, nor the mere knowledge of any thing whatsoever is to be disliked, it being good in it self, and ordained by God; but a good conscience and a virtuous life is always to be preferred before it. But because many endeavour rather to get knowledge, then to live well; therefore they are often deceived, and reap either none or very slender profit [of their labours.]

5. O, if men bestowed as much labour in the rooting out of vices, and planting of virtues, as they do in moving of questions!

sons! neither would there so much hurt
done, nor so great scandall be given in
the world, nor so much looseness be pra-
ctised in religious houses. Truly, at the
day of judgement we shall not be exami-
ned what we have read, but what we have
done: not how well we have spoken, but
how religiously we have lived. Tell me
now, where are all those Doctours and
Masters with whom thou wast well ac-
quainted, whilest they lived and flouri-
shed in learning? Now others possesse
their livings, and perhaps do scarce ever
think of them. In their life time they see-
med something, but now they are not
spoken of.

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of
the world passe away! O that their life had
been answerable to their learning! then
had their study and reading been to good
purpose. How many perish in this world
by reason of vain learning, who take little
care of the serving of God? And because
they rather choose to be great then hum-
ble, therefore they became vain in their
imaginations. He is truly great that is great
in

in charity. He is truly great, that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of any height of honour. He is truly wise that accounteth all earthly things as dung that he may gain Christ. And he is truly learned, that doeth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will.

C H A P. IV.

*Of wisdom and providence in
our actions.*

WE must not give eare to every saying or suggestion, but ought warily and leisurely to ponder things according to [the will of] God. But (alas!) such is our weaknesse that we rather often believe, and speak evil of others than good. Those that are perfect men do not easily give credit to everything one tells them for they know that humane frailty is prone to evil, and very subject to fall in words.

2. It is great wisdom not to be rash in thy proceedings, nor to stand stiffely in thine own conceits; as also not to believe every thing which thou hearest, nor pre-
sent

ently to relate again to others, what thou
 hast heard or dost believe. Consult with
 him that is wise, and conscientious, and
 seek to be instructed by a better then thy
 self, rather then to follow thine own in-
 ventions. A good life maketh a man wise
 according to God, and giveth him expe-
 rience in many things. How much the
 humbler one is in himself, and more sub-
 ject [and resigned] unto God; so much
 the more prudent shall he be in all his
 affairs, and enjoy greater peace and quiet
 of heart.

C H A P. V.

Of the reading of holy Scriptures.

TRuth, not eloquence, is to be sought
 for in holy Scripture. Each part of the
 Scripture is to be read with the same spirit
 wherewith it was written. We should
 rather search after [our spirituall] profit in
 the Scriptures, then subtilty of speech. We
 ought to reade plain and devout books
 as willingly as high and profound. Let
 not the authority of the Writer offend
 thee, whether he be of great or small learn-
 ing;

ing; but let the love of pure truth draw thee to reade .Searchnot who spake this or that , but mark what is spoken.

2. Men passe away; but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. God speaketh unto us sundry wayes , without respect of persons. Our own curiosity often hindreth us in reading of the Scriptures when as we will examine and discusse things which we should rather passe over without more ado. If thou desire to reap profit, reade humbly , plainly , and faithfully never desire the estimation of learning. Inquire willingly , and heare with silence the words of holy men: dislike not the parables of the Elders , for they are not recounted without cause.

C H A P. VI.

Of inordinate affections.

Whensoever a man desireth any thing inordinately , he is presently disquieted in himself. The proud and covetous can never rest. The poor and humble in spirit live together in all peace. The man that is not yet perfectly dead in himself,

self, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. The weak in spirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnall and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to withdraw himself from them : and easily falleth into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse of conscience; for that he yielded to his passion which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quietness of heart therefore, is gotten by resisting our passions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnall man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spirituall and fervent man.

C H A P. VII.

Of flying vain hope and pride.

HE is vain that putteth his trust in men or creatures. Be not ashamed to serve

others for the love of Jesus Christ; nor to be esteemed poor in this world. Presume not upon thy self, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thy good affection. Trust not in thine own knowledge nor in the subtilty of any living creature: but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth those that are self presuming.

2. Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in friends because potent, but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee himself. Extoll not thy self for the bigness or beauty of thy body, which is dissolved and disfigured with a little sicknesse. Take not pleasure in thy naturall gifts or wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever thou hast by nature.

3. Esteem not thy self better then others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse then they. Be not proud of wel-doing: for the judgement of God

not far different from the judgement of
Pre men, and that often offendeth him which
th please them. If there be any good in
ow thee, believe that there is much more in
aff others, that so thou maist conserve hu-
dge nility within thee. It is no prejudice unto
rea thee to debase thy self under all men : but
who is very prejudiciall to thee to preferre
of thy self before any one man. The humble
enjoy continuall peace : but in the heart
e it, of the proud is envy and frequent indig-
od nation.

C H A P. VIII.

*That too much familiarity is to be
shunned.*

LAy not thy heart open to every one;
but treat of thy affairs with the wise
and such as fear God. Converse not much
with young people and strangers. Flatter
not the rich ; neither do thou appear wil-
lingly before great personages. Keep com-
pany with the humble and plaine ones,
with the devout, and virtuous; & conferre
with them of those things that may edi-
fie. Be not familiar with any woman ; but
in

in generall commend all good women to God. Desire to be familiar with God alone and his Angels, and flie the knowledge of men.

2. We must have charity towards all, but familiarity [with all] is not expedient. Sometimes it falleth out, that a person unknown to us, is much esteemed of from the good report given him by others from whose presence notwithstanding we are not gratefull to the eyes of the beholder. We think sometimes to please others by our company, and we rather distaste them with those bad qualities which they discover in us.

C H A P. IX.

Of obedience and subjection.

IT is a great matter to live in obedience to be under a superiour, and not to be at our own disposing. It is much safer to obey, then to govern. Many live under obedience, rather for necessity then for charity: such are discontented, and do easily repine [and murmure.] Neither can they attain to freedome of mind, unless the

they willingly and heartily put themselves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest, but in humble subjection under the government of a Superiour. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own sense [and liking;] and is apt to affect those most that are of his own mind: But God be amongst us, we must sometimes for peace sake cease to adhere to our own opinion. Who is so wise that he can fully know all things? Trust not therefore to thine own opinion; but be willing to hear the judgement of others. If that which thou thinkest be not amisse, & yet thou submittest it for God, and followest the opinion of another, it shall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is safer to hear and take counsel, then to give it. It may also fall out, that each ones opinion may be good: but to refuse to yield to others when as reason or cause

requireth it, is a signe of pride and stiffness.

C H A P. X.

Of the avoiding superfluity in words.

FLy the tumultuousness of the word as much as thou canst : for the talk of worldly affairs hindereth very much although they be recounted with sincere intention; for we are quickly defiled, and enthralled with vanity. I could wish that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have spoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we so willingly speak and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we seldom return to silence without hurt of conscience? The cause why we so willingly talk, is for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receive comfort one of another: and desire to ease our mind overwearied with sundry thoughts: and we very willingly talk and think of those things which we most love and desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesome unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end: for this outward comfort is the cause of no small losse of inward and divine consolation. Therefore we must watch and pray, lest our time passe away idlie. If it belawfull and expedient for thee to speak; speak those things that may edifie. An evil custome and neglect of our own good doth give too much libertie to inconsiderate speech: Yet religious discourses of spirituall things do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially where persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

C H A P. XI.

*Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous
desire of profiting in grace.*

WE might enjoy much peace, if we would not busie our selves with the words and deeds of other men, which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace, that thrusteth himself into the cares of others, that seeks occasions abroad, that little or seldome recollecteth himself within his own
B 2 breast?

breast? Blessed are the single-hearted; for they shall enjoy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they laboured to mortify themselves wholly to all earthly desires, & therefore they could with their whole heart give themselves to God, and be free for holy retirement. We are too much led by our own passions, and too solicitous for transitory things. We also seldom overcome any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent desire to grow better every day: and therefore we remain cold and scarce warm in religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto ourselves, and not entangled within our own breasts; then should we taste divine things and have some acquaintance with heavenly enjoyments. The greatest and indeed the whole impediment is, that we are not disentangled from our passions and lusts, neither do we endeavour to enter into that path of perfection which the Saints have walked before us

and when any small adversity befallerh us, we are too quickly dejected, and turn our selves to humane comforts.

4. If we would endeavour like men of courage to stand in the battel; surely we should feel the favourable assistance of God from heaven. For he who giveth us occasion to fight, to the end we may get the victory, is ready to succour those that fight [manfully,] & do trust in his grace. If we esteem our progresse in religious life to consist onely in some exteriour observances, our devotion will quickly be at an end. But let us lay the ax to the root, that being freed from passions; we may find rest to our souls.

5. If every year we would root out one vice, we should sooner become perfect men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goeth contrary, and that we were better and purer at the beginning of our conversion, then after many years of our profession. Our fervour and profiting should increase daily; but now it is accounted a great matter, if one can retain but some part of his first zeale. If we would

but a little force ourselves at the beginning, then should we be able to perform all things afterwards with ease and delight.

6. It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accustomed, but harder to goe against our own wills. But if thou dost not overcome little and easie things, how wilt thou overcome harder things? Resist thy inclination in the very beginning, and unlearn evil customes, lest perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didst but consider how much inward peace unto thy self, and joy unto others thou shouldst procure by demeaning thy self well, I suppose thou wouldst be more carefull of thy spirituall profiting.

C H A P. XII.

Of the profit of adversity.

IT is good that we have sometimes some troubles and crosses: for they often make a man enter into himself, and consider that he is here in banishment, & ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing.

It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil or a lessening conceit had of us : and this, although we do and intend well. These things help often to the attaining of humility, and defend us from vain-glory: for then we chiefly seek God for our inward witnesse, when outwardly we be contemned by men, and when there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a man should settle himself so fully in God, that he needed not to seek many comforts of men. When a good man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts; then he understandeth better the great need he hath of God, without whom he perceiveth he can do nothing that is good. Then also he sorroweth, lamenteth, and prayeth by reason of the miseries he suffereth. Then he is weary of living longer, and wisheth that death would come, that he might be dissolved and be with Christ. Then also he well perceiveth, that perfect security and full peace cannot be had in this world.

C H A P. XIII.

Of resisting temptations.

SO long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation; for as it is written in Job, The life of man is a warfare upon earth. Every one therefore ought to be carefull about his temptations, and to watch in prayer, lest the devil find an advantage to deceive him; who never sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may devour. No man is so perfect and holy, but hath sometimes temptations: and we cannot be altogether without them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to men, though they be troublesome & grievous: for in them man is humbled, purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobate and fell away. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations or adversities,

3. There is no man that is altogether
free

free from temptations whilest he liveth on earth : for in our selves is the root thereof , being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away , another cometh ; and we shall ever have something to suffer , because we are fallen from the state of our felicity. Many seek to flie temptations , and do fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome , but by patience and true humility we become stronger then all our enemies.

4. He that onely avoideth them outwardly , and doth not pluck them up by the roots , shall profit little : yea temptations will the sooner return unto him , and he shall feel himself in a worse case then before. By little and little , and by patience with longanimity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome , then with violence and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations : and deal not roughly with him that is tempted ; but give him comfort , as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations

tions is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a ship without a stern is tossed to and fro with the waves, so the man that is negligent, and leaveth his purpose is many wayes tempted. Fire trieth iron, and temptation a just man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchfull, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the doore of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, *Obsta principiis &c.* Withstand the beginnings: for an after remedie comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind a bare cogitation of evill, then a strong imagination thereof, afterward delight and an evil motion, and then consent: and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much the longer one is negligent in resisting, he becomes daily so much the weaker in himself, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conversion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted, according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the states and deserts of men, and ordaineth all things for the welfare of his chosen ones.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulations; who surely, according to the words of S. Paul, will give with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to beare it. Let us therefore humble our selves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations; for he will save and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions man is proved how much he hath profited; and his reward is thereby the greater, & his graces do more eminently shine forth. Neither is it any such great thing if a man be devout

tions is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a ship without a stern is tossed to and fro with the waves, so the man that is negligent, and leaveth his purpose is many wayes tempted. Fire trieth iron, and temptation a just man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchfull, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the doore of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, *Obsta principiis &c.* Withstand the beginnings: for an after remedie comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind a bare cogitation of evill, then a strong imagination thereof, afterward delight and an evil motion, and then consent: and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much the longer one is negligent in resisting, he becomes daily so much the weaker in himself, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conversion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted, according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the states and deserts of men, and ordaineth all things for the welfare of his chosen ones.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulations; who surely, according to the words of S. Paul, will give with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to beare it. Let us therefore humble our selves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations; for he will save and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions man is proved how much he hath profited; and his reward is thereby the greater, & his graces do more eminently shine forth. Neither is it any such great thing if a man be devout

devout and fervent, when he feeleth affliction : but if in time of adversity he bear himself patiently, there is hope of great proficiency in grace. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often overcome in small ones which do daily occurre; to the end that being humbled, they may never presume on themselves in great matters, who are baffled in so small things.

C H A P. XIV.

Of avoiding rash judgement.

TURN thine eyes unto thy self, and beware thou judge not the deeds of other men. In judging of others a man laboureth in vain, often erreth, and easily sinneth; but in judging and discussing of himself, he alwayes laboureth fruitfully. We often judge of things according as we fancy then; for private affection be- reaves us easily of true judgement. If God were alwayes the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled through the repugnance of our carnall mind.

2. But oftentimes something lurketh within, or else occurreth from without, which draweth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion; but if things succeed otherwise then they desire, they are straight-ways troubled, & much afflicted. The diversities of judgements and opinions, cause oftentimes dissensions between religious and devout persons, between friends and countrymen.

3. An old custome is hardly broken, and no man is willing to be led further then himself can see. If thou dost more rely upon thine own reason or industry, then upon that power which brings thee under the obedience of Jesus Christ, it will be long before thou become illuminated: for God will have us perfectly subject unto him; and that being enflamed with his love, we transcend the narrow limits of humane reason.

C H A P. XV.

Of works done of Charity.

FOR no worldly thing, nor for the love of any man, is any evil to be done; but yet for the profit of one that standeth in need, a good work is sometimes to be intermitted without any scruple, or changed also for a better. For by doing this a good work is not lost, but changed into a better. The exteriour work without charity profiteth nothing; but whatsoever is done of charity, be it never so little and contemptible in the sight of the world, it becomes wholly fruitfull. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, then how much he doeth. He doeth much that loveth much.

2. He doeth much that doeth a thing well: he doeth well that rather serveth the community, then his own proper will. Oftentimes it seemeth to be charity, & is rather carnality: because naturall inclination, self-will, hope of reward, and desire of our own interest will seldome be away.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but onely desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted. He also envieth none; because he affecteth no private good: neither will he rejoyce in himself; but wisheth above all things to be made happy in the enjoyment of God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any man, but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom as from the fountain all things proceed; in whom finally all the Saints doe rest as in their highest fruition. O, he that had but one spark of true charity, would certainly discern that all earthly things be full of vanity.

C H A P. XVI.

*Of bearing with the defects
of others,*

THose things that a man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, untill God order things otherwise. Think that perhaps it is better so for thy triall and patience, without which all our good deeds are not

not much to be esteemed. Thou oughtest to pray notwithstanding, when thou hast such impediments, that God would vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned will not give over, contend not with him, but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honoured in his servants, who well knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, of what sort soever they be; for that thy self also hast many things which must be suffered by others. If thou canst not make thy self such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking? We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

3. We will have others severely corrected, and will not be corrected ourselves. The large liberty of others displeaseth us: and yet we will not have our desires denied us. We will have others kept under

nder by strict laws; but in no sort will
ur selves be restrained. And thus it appea-
th, how seldome we weigh our neigh-
our in the same ballance with our selves.
all men were perfect, what should we
ve to suffer of our neighbour for God?
4. But now God hath thus ordered
that we may learn to bear one anothers
arden: for no man is without fault, no
an but hath his burden, no man sufficient
f himself, no man wise enough of
mself; but we ought to bear with one
other, comfort one another, help, in-
struct, and admonish one another. Occa-
ons of adversity best discover how great
true or strength each one hath: for occa-
ons make not a man frail, but do shew
hat he is.

C H A P. XVII.

Of a retired life.

Thou must learn to break thy own
will in many things, if thou wilt have
peace and concord with others. It is no
small matter to dwell in a religious
community, and to converse therein
C without

without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully untill death. Blessed is he that hath there lived well, and ended happily. If thou wilt persevere in grace as thou oughtest, and profit in virtue, esteem thyself as a banished man, and a pilgrim upon earth. Thou must be contented for Christs sake to be esteemed as a fool in the world, if thou desire to lead an holy life.

2. The wearing of a religious habit and shaving of the crown, do little profit but change of manners, and perfect mortification of passions make a true religious man. He that seeketh any thing else but God, and the salvation of his soul, shall find nothing but tribulation and sorrow. Neither can he remain long in peace, that laboureth not to be the least, and subject to all.

3. Thou camest to serve, not to rule. Know that thou wast called to suffer and to labour, not to be idle, or to spend thy time in talk. Here therefore men are proved as gold in the furnace. Here no man can stand, unlesse he humble himself with his whole heart for the love of God.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the examples of the holy Fathers.

CONSIDER the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these dayes. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them! The Saints and friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakednesse, in labour and wearinesse, in watchings and fastings, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproches.

2. Ohow many and grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours, Virgins, and all the rest that endeavoured to follow the steps of Christ! They hated their lives in this world, that they might possesse their souls in everlasting life. Ohow strict and self-renouncing a life led those holy Fathers in the wilderness! How long and grievous tentations suffered they! How often were they assaulted by the enemy! What frequent and
C 2 fervent

fervent prayers offered they to God ! How rigorous an abstinence did they daily use ! How great zeal and care had they of their spirituall proficiency ! How strong a combat had they for the overcoming of their lusts ! How pure and upright intention kept they unto God ! In the day they laboured , and in the night they attended to continuall prayer ; although when they laboured also they ceased not from mentall prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit : every hour seemed short for the service of God : and by reason of the great sweetnesse they felt in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporall refreshments. They renounced all riches, dignities , honours , friends and kinsfolk ; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world ; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life : they grieved to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things , but very rich in grace and virtues. Outwardly they wanted , but inwardly they were refreshed with grace and divine consolation.

4. They

4. They were strangers to the world , but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing , and despicable to this present world : but they were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility , lived in simple obedience , walked in love and patience : and therefore they profited daily in spirit, & obtained great grace in Gods sight. They were given for an example to all religious men; and they should more provoke us to endeavour after spirituall proficiencies , then the number of the lukewarm livers should prevail to make us remisse.

5. O how great was the fervour of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy institution ! How great was their devotion to prayer ! What ambition to excell others in virtue ! How exact discipline then flourished ! How great reverence and obedience, under the rule of their Superiours, observed they in all things ! Their footsteps yet remaining do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect men ; who fighting so valiantly trode the world

C 3

under

fervent prayers offered they to God ! How rigorous an abstinence did they daily use ! How great zeal and care had they of their spirituall proficiency ! How strong a combat had they for the overcoming of their lusts ! How pure and upright intention kept they unto God ! In the day they laboured , and in the night they attended to continuall prayer ; although when they laboured also they ceased not from mentall prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit : every hour seemed short for the service of God : and by reason of the great sweetnesse they felt in contemplation they forgot the necessity of corporall refreshments. They renounced all riches , dignities , honours , friends and kinsfolke they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world ; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life they grieved to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things , but very rich in grace and virtue. Outwardly they wanted , but inwardly they were refreshed with grace and divine consolation.

4. The

4. They were strangers to the world, but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing, and despisable to this present world: but they were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked in love and patience: and therefore they prospered daily in spirit, & obtained great grace in Gods sight. They were given for an example to all religious men; and they should more provoke us to endeavour after spirituall proficiencies, then the number of the lukewarm livers should prevail to make us remisse.

5. O how great was the fervour of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy institution! How great was their devotion to prayer! What ambition to excell others in virtue! How exact discipline then flourished! How great reverence and obedience, under the rule of their Superiours, observed they in all things! Their footsteps yet remaining do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect men; who fighting so valiantly trode the world

under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that transgresseth not, and that can with patience endure that which he hath undertaken.

6. O the coldnesse and negligence of our time! that we so quickly decline from our first fervour, and are come to that passe, that very sloth & coldnesse of spirit maketh our own life tedious unto us. Would to God the desire to profit in virtue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the many examples of devout and religious persons.

C H A P. XIX.

Of the exercise of a good and religious person.

THe life of a good and religious person ought to be adorned with all virtues: that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth to men. And with reason thou oughtest to be much more within, then is perceived without: for God beholdeth us, whom we ought most highly to reverence wheresoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his sight.

Daily

okl.
ac.
that
a he
e of
rom
that
pirit
us.
t in
who
de-
per
vir-
out-
rea-
ith-
God
gh-
and
ght
aily

Daily should we renew our purposes, and stirre up our selves to fervour, as though this were the first day of our conversion; and to say, Help me my God in this my good purpose, and in thy holy service; and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly: for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. According to our purpose shall be the successe of our spiritual profiting; and much diligence is necessary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purposeth often faileth, what shall he do that seldom purposeth any thing, or with little resolvedness? It may fall out sundry wayes that we leave off our purpose: and the light omission of [spiritual] exercises seldom passes without some losse [to our souls.] The purpose of just men depends upon Gods grace, and not upon their own wisdom; upon whom they alwayes rely for whatsoever they take in hand. For man doth purpose, but God doth dispose; neither is the way of man in himself.

3. If an accustomed exercise be sometimes omitted, either for some act of

piety, or profit to my brother; it may easily afterwards be recovered again. But out of a slothfull mind, or out of carelesse we lightly forsake the same, it is a great offence against God, and will be found to be prejudiciall to our selves. Let us do the best we can, we shall easily fail in many things; yet must we alwayes purpose some certain course, and especially against those vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into, and set in order both the outward and the inward man, because both of them are expedient to our coming forward in godlinesse.

4. If thou canst not continually recollect thy self, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning or at night. In the morning fix thy good purpose; and at night examine thy self what thou hast done, how thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy neighbour. Gird thy loyns like a man against the vile assaults of the devil; bridle thy riotous appe-

appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavouring something for the publick good. As for bodily exercises they must be used with great discretion, neither are they to be practised of all men alike.

5. The exercises that are not common are not to be exposed to publick view; for things private are practised more safely at home. Neverthelesse thou must beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for what is private. But having fully and faithfully accomplished all thou art bound and enjoyned to do, if thou hast any spare time, betake thee to thy self, as thy devotion shall require. All cannot use one kind of exercise, but one is more convenient for this person, another for that; according to the seasonableness of times also divers exercises are fitting. Some sute better with us on working-dayes, other on holy-dayes: some we have need of in the time of temptation, and

and of others in time of peace and quietnesse. Some we mind when we are penfive, and other some when we rejoyce in the Lord.

6. When chief festivalls draw near good exercises are to be renewed, and the prayers of holy men more fervently to be implored. From feast to feast we should make some good purpose, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to come to the everlasting feast [in heaven.] Therefore ought we carefully to prepare our selves at holy times, and to live more devoutly, and to keep more exactly all things that we are to observe as though we were shortly at Gods hands to receive the reward of our labours.

7. But if it be deferred, let us thinke with our selves that we are not sufficiently prepared, and unworthy yet of so great glory which shall be revealed in us in due time; and let us endeavour to prepare our selves better for our departure. *Blessed that servant* (saith S. Luke the Evangelist) *whom when his Lord cometh he shall find watching*

atching; Verily I say unto you, he shall make
m ruler over all his goods.

C H A P. XX.

Of the love of solitude and silence.

Week a convenient time to retire into
thy self, and meditate often upon Gods
benefits. Meddle not with curiosities; but
make such things which may rather yield
compunction to thy heart, then busy thy
head. If thou wilt withdraw thy self from
speaking vainly and from gadding idly,
and also from hearkening after novelties and
follies, thou shalt find leisure sufficient
and convenient enough to meditate on
good things. The greatest Saints avoided
the society of men when they could con-
veniently, and did rather choose to serve
God, and to live to God, in secret.

2. One said, As oft as I have been a-
mong men, I returned home lesse a man
then I was before: and this we find true,
when we talk long together. It is easier
not to speak a word at all, then not to speak
more words then we should: It is easier
for a man to keep home, then to keep
himself

himself well when he is abroad. He therefore that intends to attain to the more inward and spirituall things of Religion must with Iesus depart from the multitude and presse of people. No man safely doth go abroad, but he which gladly can abide at home: no man speaks securely, but he that holds his peace willingly. No man ruleth safely, but he that is ruled willingly: no man securely doth command, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

3. No man rejoyceth securely, unless he hath within him the testimony of a good conscience; and yet the security of the Saints was alwayes full of the fear of God. Neither were they lesse careful to be humble in themselves, for that they shined outwardly with grace & great virtues. But the security of the wicked riseth out of pride & presumption, and in the end it deceiveth them. Although thou seem to be a good religious man, or a devout Hermit, yet promise not thy self security in this life.

4. Oftentimes those have fallen into the greatest danger by overmuch self-confidence

book
ther
more
gion
titue
do
ab
outh
ma
ing
outh
nle
of
ity
ar
ful
ine
Be
at
t d
ob
Ho
y
n
m
c

ence, who have been in greatest esteem
and account amongst men. Wherefore it
more profitable to many not to be alto-
gether free from temptations, but to be
often assaulted, lest they should be too
secure, and so perhaps be puffed up with
pride; or too freely give themselves to
worldly comforts. O how good a consci-
ence should he keep, that would never
seek after transitory joy, nor entangle him-
self with the things of this world! O how
great peace and quietnesse should he pos-
sess, that would cut off all vain solicitude,
and think onely upon divine things, and
such as are profitable for his soul, and
would place all his confidence in
God!

5. No man is worthy of heavenly
comfort, unlesse he have diligently exerci-
sed himself in holy compunction. If thou
desirest true contrition of heart, enter into
thy closet, and shut out the tumults of the
world, as it is written, In your chambers
thy eye grieved. In thy closet thou shalt find
what abroad thou shalt often lose; the
more thou visitest thy closet, the more
thou

thou wilt like it ; the lesse thou comest thereunto, the more thou wilt loth it. If at the beginning of thy amendment thou art content to remain in it, and keep it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend and a most pleasant comfort.

6. In silence and in stillnesse a religious soul advantageth her self, and learneth the mysteries of holy Scripture. There she findeth rivers of tears wherein she may every night wash and cleanse her self; thus she may be so much the more familiar with her Creatour, by how much the further off she liveth from all worldly disquiet. Who so therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends, God with his holy Angels will draw near unto him. It is better for a man to live privately and to have regard to himself, then to neglect his soul, though he could work wonders in the world. It is very commendable in a religious person, seldome to go abroad, and to be unwilling to see others.

7. Why art thou desirous to see that which is unlawfull for thee to enjoy? for the world passeth away and the lust thereof

f. Our sensuall desires draw us to rove broad; but when the time is past, what carriest thou home with thee but a burdened conscience and distracted heart? A merry going out bringeth commonly a mournfull return home; and a joyfull evening makes [many times] a sad morning. No all carnal joy enters gently, but in the end it bites and stings to death. What canst thou see elsewhere, which thou canst not see here? behold the Heaven and the Earth and all the Elements; for of these are all things created.

8. What canst thou see any where that can long continue under the sun? Thou thinkest perchance to satiate thy self, but thou canst never attain it. Shouldst thou see all things present before thine eyes, what were it but a vain [and unprofitable] sight? Lift up thine eyes to God in the highest, and pray him to pardon all thy sinnes and negligencies. Leave vain things to the vain, but be thou intent upon those things which God commandeth thee. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee Jesus thy Beloved. Stay with him in thy closet;
for

for thou shalt not find so great peace any where else. Hadst thou not gone abroad and hearkened to idle rumours, thou mightest the better have enjoyed quietness. But sith thou delightest sometime to hear novelties, it is fit thou suffer for some unquietnesse of mind.

C H A P. XXI.

Of compunction of heart.

IF thou wilt make any progress in godliness, keep thy self in the fear of God, and affect not too much libertie. Keep in all thy senses under [the severe rod of] discipline, & give not thy self over to foolish mirth. Give thy self to compunction of heart, and thou shalt gain much devotion thereby: compunction bringeth much good, which dissolutenesse is wont quickly to destroy. It is a wonder that any man can ever perfectly rejoyce in this life, if he duly consider his banishment, and thoroughly weigh the many perils wherewith his soul is invironed.

2. The levity of our minds and the little care we have of our faults, maketh us insensible

insensible of the sorrows of our souls; but oftentimes we vainly laugh, when we have just cause to weep. There is no true liberty nor right gladness, but in the fear of God accompanied with a good conscience. Happy is he that can avoid all distracting impediments, and bring himself to the union of holy compunction. Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burthen his conscience. Resist manfully: one custome overcometh another. If thou canst let others alone in their matters, they likewise shall not hinder thee in thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters which appertain to others; neither do thou trouble thy self with the affairs of thy betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self, before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favour of men, be not grieved at it, but take this to heart, that thou dost not carry thy self so warily and circumspectly, as it becometh the servant of God, and a devout religious man. It is better oftentimes and safer that a man hath not many

many consolations in this life, especially such as are agreeable to the flesh. But that we have not at all or do very seldome taste divine consolations, the fault is ours, because we seek not after compunction of heart, nor do altogether forsake the vain and outward comforts [of this world.]

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine consolation, and that thou hast rather deserved much tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grievous and bitter unto him. A good man findeth alwayes sufficient cause of mourning and weeping: for whether he consider his own or his neighbours estate, he knoweth that none liveth here without tribulation. And by how much a man looks narrowly into himself by so much the more he sorroweth. Our sins and wickednesses wherein we are so enwrapt, that we can seldome apply ourselves to heavenly contemplations, do minister unto us matter of most just sorrow and inward compunction.

5. Didst thou oftener think of thy death, then of thy living long, there is no
qu

question but thou wouldst be more careful to amend. I believe thou wouldst willingly undergo any labour or sorrow in this world, and not be afraid of the greatest austerity, if thou didst consider within thy self the infernall paines in the other world. But because these things enter not to the heart, and we still love those things onely that delight us, therefore it is we remain very dull and cold in religion.

6. It is often our want of spirit which maketh our miserable body so easily complain. Pray therefore unto the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchsafe to give thee the spirit of compunction. And say with the Prophet, Ps. 80. *Feed, me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me plenteousness of tears to drink.*

C H A P. XXII.

Of the Consideration of humane misery.

Miserable thou art wheresoever thou be, or whithersoever thou turnest, lesse thou turn thy self unto God. Why art thou troubled when things succeed

not as thou wouldest or desirest? for who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any man upon earth; there is none in this world, be he King or Pope, without some tribulation or other. Who is then in the best case [or condition?] even he who can suffer something for God.

2. Many weak and infirme ones can say, Behold what an happy life hath such an one, how wealthy, how great he is, in how great power and dignity! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of heaven, & thou shalt see that all the goods of this life are nothing so to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdensome than otherwise, because they are never enjoyed without carefulnesse and fear. Mans happiness consisteth not in having abundance of wealth, but a mean estate should content him; it is truly misery enough even to live upon the earth. The more a man would be spirituall, the more bitter to him is this present life; because he seeth more clearly & perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruption. For

eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labour and to rest, and to be subject to other necessities of nature, is doubtlesse a great misery and affliction to a religious man, that would gladly be free and delivered from all sin.

3. For the inward man is much oppressed with these [outward and] corporall necessities whilest we live in this world. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion to be delivered from them, saying, *Bring me, O Lord, out of my necessities.* But woe to them that know not their own misery; and a greater woe to them that love this miserable and corruptible life. And some there be so much doted upon it, that although with great labour and pains they can scarce get mere necessities, yet could they live here always, they would care nothing at all for the kingdome of heaven.

4. O how foolish are these and faithlesse in their hearts, who lie so deeply sunk in the earth, that they can mind or relish nothing but carnall things. But miserable wretches as they are, they shall in the end

feel to their cost how vile and how nothing that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, and all the devout friends of Christ respected not those things which pleased the flesh, and which flourished in this life, but longed for the everlasting riches with their whole hope and desire. Their whole desire was carried upward to things durable and invisible, that the desire of things visible might not draw them to things below. O brother, lose not thy hope of coming forward in godliness; there is yet time, the hour is not yet past.

5. Why wilt thou deferre thy good purpose from day to day? Arise and begin in this very instant, and say, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be striving, now is the best time to amend my self. When thou art ill at ease and much troubled, then is the time of deserv- ing best; thou must passe through fire and water before thou comest to the place of refreshing. Unlesse thou dost earnestly force thy self, thou shalt never get the victory over sin: so long as we carry about

okl
w no
here
vour
hings
flou
ever
e and
d up
that
draw
lof
god
t ye
ood
d be
ow is
e to
ene
and
ele
and
e o
est
e v
ut u
thin

this frail body of ours, we can never be without sin, or live without trouble and sorrow. We would gladly be quiet and freed from all misery, but seeing by sin we have lost our innocency, we have together with that lost also the true felicity. Therefore it becomes us to have patience, and to wait for the mercy of God, till this our iniquity be put away, and this mortality of ours be swallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty, which is alwayes prone to evill! to day thou confessest thy sins, and to morrow thou committest the very same thou hast confessed. Now thou art purposed to look well unto thy wayes, and within a while thou so behavest thy self, as though thou hadst never any such purpose at all. Good cause have we therefore to humble our selves, and never to have any great conceit of our selves, because we are so frail and so inconstant. Besides, that may quickly be lost by our own negligence, which by the grace of God and our own great pains we have scarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold so timely? Woe be unto us, if we will so give our selves unto ease, as if all were in peace & safety, when as yet there appeareth no signe of true holiness in our conversations! We have need like young beginners to be newly instructed again to good life, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and proficiency in spirituall things.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of the meditation of Death.

THere will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore see what will become of thee hereafter. To day a man, to morrow none; and out of sight, out of mind. O the stupidity and hardnesse of mans heart, who thinketh only upon the present, and hath no more care of what is to come! Thou shouldest so order thy self in all thy thoughts and actions, as if to day, yea this very moment, thou wert ready to depart. Hadst thou a clear conscience, thou wouldst not greatly fear death.

death. It were better to avoid sin, then to
by death. If thou art not prepared to day,
how wilt thou be prepared to morrow?
tomorrow is uncertain, & how knowest
thou that thou shalt live till to morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when
we are so little the better [by long living?]
alas! length of dayes doth oftner make
our sins the greater, then our lives the bet-
ter. O that we had spent but one day well
in this world! Many there are who count
how long it is since their conversion; and
yet full slender oftentimes is the fruit of
amendment of life. If to die be accounted
readfull, to live long may perhaps prove
more dangerous. Happy is he that alwaies
hath the hour of his death before his eyes,
and daily prepareth himself for to die. If
any time thou hast seen another man
die, make account thou must also passe
the same way.

3. When it is morning, think thou
mayest die before night; and when even-
g comes, dare not to promise thy self the
next morning. Be thou therefore alwaies
in a readinesse, and so lead thy life that
death

death may never take thee unprepared. Many die suddenly and when they loose not for it: for the Son of man will come when we think not of his coming. When that last hour shall come, thou wilt begin to have a farre different opinion of thy whole life that is past, and be exceedingly sorry thou hast been so carelesse and misse.

4. O how wise and happy is he that now laboureth to be such an one in this life, as he wisheth to be found at the hour of his death! A perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to go forward in vertue, the love of discipline, the painfulness of repentance, the readiness of obedience, the denying of our selves, and the bearing any affliction for the love of Christ patiently, will give us great confidence we shall die happily. Whilst thou art in health thou mayst do much good, but when thou art sick, I see not what thou art able to do. Few by sickness grow better and more reformed; as also they who wander many abroad, seldome thereby become holy.

5. Trust not to friends and kindred

either do thou put off the care of thy
soul's welfare till hereafter; for men will
sooner forget thee, then thou art aware
of. It is better to look to it betime, and
provide some good beforehand, then to trust
to other mens courtesies. If thou beest
not carefull for thy self now, who will be
carefull for thee hereafter? The time that
now present is very pretious, now are
the dayes of salvation, now is the accep-
table time. But alas! that thou shouldst
spend thy time so idly here, where thou
mightst purchase to live eternally hereaf-
ter. The time will come when thou shalt
desire one day or hour to amend in, and
cannot say that it will be granted thee.

6. O beloved, from how great danger
mightst thou deliver thy self! from how
great fear free thy self, if thou wouldst be
wayes mindfull of death! Labour now
to live so, that at the hour of death thou
mayst rather rejoyce then fear: learn now
to die to the world, that thou mayst then
begin to live with Christ. Learn now to
contemne all [earthly] things, that thou
mayst freely go to Christ. Chastise thy bo-
dy

dy now by repentance, that thou may then have assured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why dost thou think to live long, when thou canst not promise to thy self one day? How many have been deceived and suddenly snatcht away? How often dost thou hear these reports, Such a man is slain, another man is drowned, a third breaks his neck with a fall from some high place, this man died eating, and that man playing? One perished by fire, another by the sword, another of the plague, another was slain by thieves. Thus death is the end of all, and mans life suddenly passeth away like a shadow.

8. Who shall remember thee when thou art dead? Do, do now, my beloved whatsoever thou art able to do: for thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall befall thee after thy death. Now whilst thou hast time heap unto thy self everlasting riches, think on nothing but the salvation of thy soul, care for nothing but the things of God. Make now friends to thy self by honouring the Saints of God, & imitating their actions, that when thou

you failest in this short life, they may receive thee into everlasting habitations.

9. Keep thy self as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free, and lifted up to God, because thou hast here no abiding city. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighs together with thy tears, that after death thy spirit may with much happiness come to the Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXIV.

Of Iudgement, and the punishment of Sins.

IN all things have a speciall aim to thy end, and how thou wilt be able to stand before that severe Judge to whom nothing is hid, who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any excuses, but will judge according to right & equity. O wretched and foolish sinner, who sometimes fearing the countenance of an angry man, what answer wilt thou make to God who knoweth all thy wickedness? Why dost thou

thou not provide for thy self against the great day of judgement, when no man can excuse or answer for another, but every one shall have enough to answer for himself? Now are thy pains profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groans audible, thy grief pacifieth God, and purgeth the soul.

2. The patient man hath a great and wholesome purgatory, who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of another then for his own wrongs: who prayeth willingly for his adversaries, and from his heart forgiveth their offences: he delayeth not to ask forgiveness of whomsoever he hath offended; he is sooner moved to compassion then to anger; he often offereth [a holy] violence to himself, and laboureth to bring the body wholly into subjection to the spirit. It is better to purge out our sins and cut off our vices here, then to keep them to be punished hereafter. Verily we do but deceive our selves through an inordinate love of the flesh.

3. What is it that that infernall fire feedeth upon

on, but thy sins? The more thou sparest
thyself now and followest the flesh, so
much the more hereafter shall be thy
punishment, and thou storest up greater
well for that flame. In what thing a man
hath sinned, in the same shall he be the
more grievously punished. There shall the
worthfull be pricked forward with burn-
ing goads, and the gluttons be tormented
with great hunger and thirst. There shall
the luxurious and lovers of pleasures be
tormented in burning pitch & stinking brim-
stone; and the envious like mad dogs shall
howl for very grief.

4. There is no sin but shall have its
proper torment. There the proud shall be
tormented with all confusion: the covetous
shall be pinched with miserable penury:
in one hour of pain there shall be more bit-
ter than a thousand years of the sharpest
penance here. There is no quiet, no
comfort for the damned there: yet here
we have some intermission of our la-
bours, and enjoy the comfort of our
friends. Be now solicitous and sorrowfull
because of thy sins, that at the day of judge-
ment

ment thou mayst be secure with the company of blessed souls. For then shall the righteous with great boldnesse stand gainst such as have vexed and oppressed them; then shall he stand to judgement who doth now humbly submit himselfe to the censures of men. Then shall the poore and humble have great confidence, but the proud man shall be compassed with fear on every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this world, who had learned for Christ to be a fool and despised. Then shall every affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity shall be stopped up. Then shall the devout rejoyce, and the profane shall mourn. Then shall he more rejoyce that hath beaten down his own flesh, then he that hath abounded in all pleasure and delight. Then shall the poore attire shine gloriously, and the precious robes seem vile and contemptible. Then shall be more commended the poor cottage, then the gilded pallace. Then will constant patience more avail us, then all earthly power.

power. Then simple obedience shall be preferred before all worldly wisdom.

6. Then shall a good and clear conscience more rejoyce a man then the profound [learning of] philosophy. Then shall the contempt of riches weigh more then all the worldlings treasure. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou hast prayed devoutly, then that thou hast fared daintily. Then wilt thou be more glad thou hast kept silence, then that thou hast talked much. Then will good works avail more then many goodly words. Then a strict life and severe repentance will be more pleasing then all earthly delights. Accustome thy self now to suffer a little, that thou mayest be delivered from more grievous hardships. Prove first here what thou canst endure hereafter. If now thou canst endure so little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetuall torments? if now a little suffering make thee so impatient, what will hell-fire do hereafter? Assure thy self thou canst not have two Paradoxes: it is impossible to enjoy delights

in this world, and after that to reign with Christ.

7. Suppose thou hast hitherto lived a wayes in honours and delights, what would all this avail thee if thou wert to die at this instant? All therefore is vanity but to love God and serve him onely. For he that loveth God with all his heart, neither afraid of death nor punishment nor of judgement, nor of hell: for perfect love gives secure access to God. But he that takes delight in sin, what marvell is if he be afraid both of death and judgement? Yet it is good, although love be not yet of force to withhold thee from sin, that at least the fear of hell should restrain thee. But he that layeth aside the fear of God, can never continue long in a good estate, but falleth quickly into the snares of the devil.

C H A P. XXV.

Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.

BE watchfull and diligent in the service of God, and often bethink

self wherefore thou camest hither, and why thou hast left the world. Was it not that thou mightst live to God, & become a spirituall man? Be fervent then to come forward, for shortly thou shalt receive a reward of thy labours; there shall not be then any fear or sorrow in thy coasts. Labour but now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea perpetuall joy [to thy soul.] If thou continuest faithfull and fervent in doing [good,] no doubt but God will be faithfull and liberall in rewarding thee. Thou oughtst to have a good hope for getting the victory; but thou must not be secure, lest thou wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church in prayer, and said within himself, *O, if I knew that I should yet persevere!* he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, *What if thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be secure.* And be-

ing herewith comforted & strengthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased: neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befall him; but rather laboured to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning & accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from a spirituall progress, and the diligent amendment of their lives: *viz.* the horror of the difficulty, or the labour of the combat. But they above others improve most in virtue, that endeavour most to overcome those things which are grievous and contrary unto them. For there a man improveth more, and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himself & mortifieth himself in spirit.

4. But all men have not alike to overcome and mortifie: yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he have more passions,

sions, shall profit more in virtue then another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be lesse fervent in the pursuit of virtue. Two things especially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our selves violently from that to which nature is viciously inclined, and to labour earnestly for that virtue which we most want. Be carefull also to avoid with great diligence those things in thy self, which do commonly displease thee in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy soul where-soever thou be; so as if thou seest or hearest of any good examples, stirre up thy self to the imitation thereof. But if thou seest any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labour quickly to amend it. As thine eye observeth others, so art thou also noted again by others. O how sweet and pleasant a thing it is, to see the servants of Christ fervent and devout, enuied with virtuous and decent manners! And on the contrary, How pittypfull and grievous a thing it is, to see them that live in a dissolute and disordered sort, not

plying themselves to that for which they were called! O how hurtfull a thing it is to neglect the good purposes of their vocation, and to busie themselves in that which is not committed to their care!

6. Be mindfull of the profession thou hast made, and have alwayes before the eyes of thy soul the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed looking upon the life of Jesus Christ, seeing thou hast as yet not more endeavoured to conform thy self unto him, though thou hast walked a long time in the way of God. A religious person that exerciseth himself seriously, and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is necessary and profitable for him; neither shall he need to seek any better thing, out of Jesus. O, if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully should we be instructed [in all truth!]

7. A fervent religious person taketh and beareth all well that is commanded him: but he that is negligent and cold

hath

death tribulation upon tribulation, & on all sides is afflicted: for he is void of inward consolation, & is forbidden to seek external comforts. A religious person that lieth not according to discipline, lies open to great mischief to the ruin of his soul. He that seeketh liberty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet: for one thing or other will displease him.

8. O that we had nothing else to do, but alwayes with our mouth, and whole heart to praise our Lord God! O that thou mightst never have need to eat, nor drink, nor sleep; but mightst alwayes praise God, & onely employ thy self in spirituall exercises: thou shouldst then be much more happy then now thou art, when for so many necessities thou art constrained to serve thy body. Would God these necessities were not at all, but onely the spirituall defections of the soul, which, alas, we taste of too seldome.

9. When a man cometh to that estate, that he seeketh not his comfort from any creature, then doth he begin perfectly to delight in God. Then shall he be contented

with whatsoever doth befall him in this world. Then shall he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be sorrowfull for small, but entirely and confidently commit himself to God, who shall be unto him all in all; to whom nothing doth perish, nor die, but all things do live unto him, and serve him at a beck without delay.

10. Remember alwayes thy end, and how that time lost never returns. Without care & diligence thou shalt never get virtue. If thou beginnest to wax cold, it will be evill with thee; but if thou give thy self to fervour [of spirit,] thou shalt find much peace, and feel lesse labour, through the assistance of Gods grace, & love of virtue. The fervent and diligent man is prepared for all things. It is harder to resist vices and passions, then to toil in bodily labours. He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt alwayes rejoyce in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchfull over thy self, stir up thy self, warn thy self, & whatsoever becomes of others neglect not thy self. The more [holy] violence thou

you usest against thy self, the more shall
thy [spirituall] profiting. *Amen.*

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the inward life.

THe Kingdome of God is within
you, saith the Lord. Turn thee
with thy whole heart unto the
Lord, & forsake this wretched
world, and thy soul shall find rest. Learn
to despise exteriour things, and to give
thy self to the interiour, and thou shalt per-
ceive the kingdome of God to come into
thee. *For the kingdome of God is peace, and
is in the holy Ghost*, which is not given to
the wicked. Christ will come into thee,
and shew thee his consolations, if thou
prepare for him a worthy mansion within
thee. All his glory and beauty is with-
in, and there he pleaseth himself. The in-
ward

ward man he often visits; and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant solace much peace, wonderfull familiarity.

2. O faithfull soul, make ready thy heart for this bridegroom, that he may vouchsafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee. For he saith, *If any love me, he will keep my words, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him.* Give therefore admittance unto Christ, and deny entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ, thou art rich and he will suffice thee. He will be thy faithfull & provident helper in all things so as thou shalt not need to trust in men. For men are soon changed, and quickly fail, but Christ remaineth for ever, and standeth firmly unto the end.

3. There is little trust to be put in frail and mortall man, though he be profitable and dear unto thee: neither oughtest thou much to be grieved, if sometimes he cross and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be against thee and so on the contrary, they often turn like unto the wind. Put all thy trust in God.

od, let him be thy fear and thy love: He
 ll answer for thee, and do in all things
 hat is best. Thou hast not here an abi-
 ng city; and wheresoever thou be, thou
 a stranger and pilgrime: neither shalt
 ou ever have rest, unlesse thou be most
 wardly united unto Christ.

4. Why dost thou here gaze about,
 ce this is not the place of thy rest? In
 aven ought to be thy dwelling, and all
 rthly things are to be lookt upon as it
 ere by the way. All things passe away,
 d thou together with them. Beware
 ou cleave not unto them, lest thou be
 tangled, and so dost perish. Let thy
 ought be on the Highest, and thy prayer
 irected unto Christ without ceasing. If
 ou canst not contemplate high and hea-
 enly things, rest thy self in the passion of
 hrist, and dwell willingly in his holy
 ounds. For if thou flie devoutly unto
 e wounds and precious marks of the
 ord Jesus, thou shalt feel great comfort
 tribulation: neither wilt thou much
 are for being despised of men, and wilt
 asily bear words of detraction.

5. Christ

5. Christ was also in the world despised of men, and in greatest necessity, forsaken by his acquaintance and friends in the midst of slanders. Christ would suffer and be despised; and darest thou complain any? Christ had adversaries and backbiters; & wilt thou have all men thy friends and benefactors? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no adversity happen unto thee? If thou wilt suffer no adversity how wilt thou be the friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ and for Christ, if thou desire to reign with Christ.

6. If thou hadst but once perfectly entered into the secrets of Jesus, and tasted a little of his ardent affection; then wouldst thou not weigh thine own commodity or discommodity, but wouldst rather rejoice at slanders, when they should chance to be cast upon thee: for the love of Jesus maketh a man to despise himself. A love of Jesus and of the truth, and a true inward Christian and one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himself unto God, and lift himself above himself in spirit, and with the greatest enjoyment of his soul rest in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they
are, and not as they are said and esteemed
to be, is truly wise, and taught rather by
God than men. He that can live inward-
ly, and make small reckoning of outward
things, neither requireth places, nor at-
tendeth times, for performing of religious
exercises. A spirituall man quickly recol-
lecteth himself, because he never pour-
sued himself wholly to outward things.
He is not hindred by outward labour or
business, which may be necessary for the
world: but as things fall out, so he frameth
himself unto them. He that hath well or-
dered and disposed all things within, ca-
reth not for the strange and perverse car-
riages of men. So much is a man hired
and distracted, by how much he draweth
externall] matters unto himself.

8. If all went well with thee, and if
thou wert well purged, all things would
work out to thy good and advantage. But
many things displease and often trouble
thee, because thou art not yet perfectly
drawn unto thy self, nor separated from all
worldly things. Nothing so defileth and
in-

intangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to creatures. If thou refuse our worldly comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of heaven, and often receive internall joy.

C H A P. II.

Of humble submission.

Respect not much who is with thee, nor who is against thee: but endeavour and take care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doest. Have a good conscience, and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canst not keep thy peace and suffer, without doubt thou shalt see that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee, and therefore thou oughtest to resign thy self unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from shame. Oftentimes it is very profitable for the keeping us more humble, that others know and reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himself for his faults, then he easily pacifieth others.

and quickly satisfieth those that are offended with him. God protecteth and delivereth the humble; he loveth and comforteth the humble; unto the humble man he inclineth himself; unto the humble he giveth great grace; and after his humiliation he raiseth him unto glory. Unto the humble he revealeth his secrets, & sweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himself. The humble person though he suffer shame, is yet in peace; for that he resteth in God, and not in the world. Do not think that thou hast profited any thing, unless thou esteem thy self inferiour to all.

C H A P. III.

Of a good and peaceable man.

First, keep thy self in peace, and then mayst thou pacifie others. A peaceable man doth more good then he that is well learned. A passionate man turneth even good into evil, and easily believeth the worst. A good peaceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace, is not suspicious of any. But he that
is

is discontented and troubled, is tossed with divers suspicions: he is neither quiet himself, nor suffereth others to be quiet. He often speaketh that which he ought not to speak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do. He considereth what others are bound to do, and neglecteth that which he is bound to do himself. First therefore have a careful zeal over thy self, and then thou mayest justly shew thy self zealous also of thy neighbours good.

2. Thou knowest well how to excuse and colour thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuses of others. It were more meet that thou didst accuse thy self, and excusedst thy brother. If thou wilt be born withall, bear also with another. Behold how farre off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but onely against himself. It is no great matter to converse with the good, and those that are of a gentle disposition; for that is naturally pleasing to all, and every one willingly

ngly enjoyeth peace, and loveth those
est that agree with him. But to be able
olive peaceably with unquiet, and per-
erse men, or with the disorderly, or such
s contradict us, is a great grace, and a very
ommendable and manly deed.

3. Some there are that keep them-
elves in peace, and are in peace also with
others. And there are some that neither
are in peace themselves, nor suffer others
to be in peace. Some there are who are
troublesome to others, but alwayes more
troublesome to themselves. And others
there are that keep themselves in peace,
and labour to bring others unto peace.
Our whole peace in this miserable life
consisteth rather in humble suffering,
then in not feeling adversities. He that
can best tell how to suffer, will best keep
himself in peace. He is a conquerour of
himself, a Lord of the world, a friend of
Christ, and heir of heaven.

C H A P. IV.

Of a pure mind, and upright intention.

With two wings man is lifted up from earthly vanities, that is, with *simplicity* and *purity*. Simplicity ought to be in our intention: Purity in our affection. Simplicity doth intend God: Purity doth apprehend and taste him. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from all inordinate affection. If thou intend and seek nothing else but the will of God & the good of thy neighbour, thou shalt enjoy internall liberty. If thy heart were sincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking-glasse of life, & a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature so little and abject that representeth not the goodnesse of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly good and pure, then thou wouldest be well able to see and understand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth heaven and hell. Such as every one is inwardly, so he judgeth outwardly. If there

be joy in the world, surely a man of a pure heart possesseth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil conscience best feels it. As iron put into the fire loseth his rust, and becometh all bright like fire: so he that wholly turneth himself unto God, is purged from all foulness & slothfulnesse, and is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold, when he is afraid of a small labour, and willingly receiveth externall comfort. But when he once beginneth to overcome himself perfectly, and to walk manfully in the way of God; then he esteemeth those things to be light, which before seemed grievous unto him.

C H A P. V.

Of the consideration of ones self.

WE cannot trust much to our selves, for that grace oftentimes and understanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly lose by our negligence. And

oftentimes we do not perceive our own inward blindnesse. We often do evil, and excuse it worse. We are sometimes moved with passion, and we think it to be Zeal. We reprehend small things in others, and passe over greater matters in our selves. We quickly feel and weigh what we suffer at the hands of others: but we mind not what others suffer from us. He that doth well and rightly consider his own works, will find little cause to judge hardly of another.

2. The inward Christian preferreth the care of himself before all other cares. And he that diligently attendeth unto himself doth seldome speak much of others. Thou wilt never be so inwardly religious, unlesse thou passe over other mens matters with silence, and look especially to thy self. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy self, thou wilt be little moved with whatsoever thou seest abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy self? And when thou hast run over all, what hast thou then profited, if thou hast neglected thy self? If thou desire
peace

peace of mind and true union, thou must put all things behind thee, and look only upon thy self.

3. Thou shalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy self free from all temporall cares. Thou shalt greatly decrease, if thou esteem any thing of this world. Let nothing be great unto thee, nothing high, nothing gratefull, nothing acceptable, but onely God himself, or that which is of God. Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. A soul that loveth God, despiseth all things that be inferiour unto God. God alone is everlasting, and of infinite greatnesse, filling all creatures: the souls solace, and the true joy of the heart.

C H A P. VI.

Of the joy of a good conscience.

THe glory of a good man, is the testimony of a good conscience. Have a good conscience, and thou shalt ever have joy. A good conscience is able to bear very much, and is very chearfull in

adversities. An evil conscience is alwayes fearfull and unquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never rejoyce, but when thou hast done well. Sinners have never true mirth, nor feel inward peace; because *there is no peace to the wicked*, saith the Lord. And if they should say, We are in peace, no evil shall fall upon us, and who shall dare to hurt us? believe them not; for upon a sudden will arise the wrath of God, and their deeds shall be brought to nought, and their thoughts shall perish.

2. To glory in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth; for to glory so, is to glory in the Cross of our Lord. That glory is short, which is given and received from men. Sorrow alwayes accompanieth the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their consciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladnesse of the just is of God, and in God: and their joy is of the truth. He that desireth true and everlasting glory, careth not for that which passeth away with time. And he that seeketh temporall glory, or con-
temneth

remneth it not from his heart; sheweth himself but little to esteem of the glory of heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquillity and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praises, nor dispraises of men.

3. He will easily be content and pacified, whose conscience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him: nor the more abject, though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art: neither canst thou be said to be greater, then what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man seeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart. Man considereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do alwayes well, and to esteem little of himself, is a signe of an humble soul. To refuse to be comforted by any creature, is a signe of great purity, and inward confidence.

4. He that seeketh no witnesse for himself from without, doth shew that he hath wholly committed himself unto God.

For not he that commendeth himself, the

same is approved (saith blessed Paul) *but*
whom God commendeth. To walk inwardly with God, and not to be possessed with any outward affection, is the state of a spirituall man.

C H A P. VII.

Of the love of Iesus above all things.

Blessed is he that understandeth what it is to love Iesus, and to despise himself for Iesus. Thou oughtest to leave thy beloved, for thy beloved; for that Iesus will be beloved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitfull and unconstant: the love of Iesus is faithfull and constant. He that cleaveth unto creatures, shall fall with that which is subject to fall: He that imbraceth Iesus, shall stand firmly for ever. Love him, and keep him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end. Thou must once be left of all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep close to Iesus both in life and death, and commit thy self unto his trust, who,

who, when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature, that he will not admit of a corrivall; but will have thy heart alone, and sit like a King in his own throne. If thou couldest purge thy self perfectly of all creatures, Jesus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatsoever thou reposest in men, out of Jesus, is all no better then lost. Trust not nor relie upon a reed full of wind: for that all flesh is as grasse, and all the glory thereof shall wither away as the flower of the field.

3. Thou shalt quickly be deceived, if thou look onely to the outward shew of men. And if in them thou seekest thy comfort and profit, thou shalt often feel losse. If thou seekest Iesus in all things, thou shalt surely find Iesus. But if thou seekest thy self, thou shalt also find thy self, out to thy own harm. For man doth more hurt himself if he seek not Iesus, then the whole world and all his adversaries could annoy him.

C H A P. VIII.

Of familiar conversation with Iesus.

WHen Iesus is present, all is well, and nothing seemeth difficult: but when Iesus is absent, every thing is hard. When Iesus speaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth: but when Iesus speak but one word, we feel much consolation. Did not Mary presently rise from the place where she wept, when Martha said unto her, *The master is come and calleth for thee?* Happy is the hour when Iesus calleth from tears to spiritual joy. How drie and hard art thou without Iesus! How foolish and vain, if thou desire any thing out of Iesus! Is not this greater losse, then if thou shouldest lose the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Iesus? To be without Iesus is grievous hell; and to be with Iesus is sweet Paradise. If Iesus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Iesus, findeth a good treasure, yea a good

ove all goods: And he that loseth Iesus,
seth too much, and more then the
hole world. He is most poore that
seth without Iesus: and he most rich
that is well with Iesus.

3. It is a piece of great skill to know
ow to converse with Iesus, and great
isdom to know how to keep Iesus. Be
umble and peaccable, and Iesus will be
ith thee. Be devout and quiet, and
esus will stay with thee. Thou mayest
on drive away Iesus and lose his grace,
thou turn aside to outward things. And
thou shouldst drive him from thee, and
lose him, unto whom wilt thou flie, and
what friends wilt thou then seek? With-
out a friend thou canst not well live: and
f Iesus be not above all a friend unto
thee, thou shalt be too too sorrowfull and
desolate. Thou doest therefore foolishly,
f thou dost trust or rejoyce in any other.
It is better for thee to have all the world
gainst thee, then Iesus offended with
thee. Amongst all things therefore that
be dear unto thee, let Iesus alone be thy
chiefest beloved.

4. Love all for Iesus, but Iesus for himself. Iesus Christ alone is singularly to be beloved; who alone is found to be good and faithfull above all friends. For him and in him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee; and all these are to be prayed for, that all may know and love him. Never desire to be singularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth onely unto God, who hath none like unto himself. Neither do thou desire that the heart of any should be set on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any, but let Iesus be in thee, and in every good man.

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy heart with any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and to carry a pure heart to God, if thou wouldst be free to consider and see how sweet the Lord is. And truly, unless thou be prevented and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happiness, to forsake and cast off all, that thou alone mayst be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a man, then

When he is made able for all things. And when it goeth away, he is poor and weak, and as it were left onely unto the staff and scourge of every adversary. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair; but to resigne thy self with all indifferencie unto the will of God, and to bear all things that befall thee for the glory of Christ: for after winter followeth summer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, fair weather.

C H A P. I X.

Of the want of all comfort.

IT is no hard matter to despise humane comfort, when we have divine. It is much and very much, to be able to want both humane and divine comfort; and for the glory of God, to be willing to endure desolation of heart; and to seek himself in nothing, nor to regard his own merit. What great matter is it, if thou be cheerfull and devout at the coming of grace? This hour is wished for of all men. Herideth easily enough whom the grace of

of God carrieth. And what marvell if he
feel not his burden, who is born up by the
Almighty, & led by the soveraign guide

2. We are alwayes willing to have
something for our comfort: and a man
doth hardly put off [and forsake] himself.
The holy martyr St. Laurence overcame
the world with his Prelate; because he
despised whatsoever seemed delightfome
in the world, and for the love of Christ
patiently suffered Sixtus to be taken
from him, whom he most dearly loved.
He overcame therefore the love of man
by the love of the Creatour; and he rather
chose the divine good pleasure, then hu-
mane comfort. See thou also learn to
forsake some necessary thing, and a be-
loved friend, for the love of God. Be not
grieved when thou art forsaken by a
friend, knowing that we all at length
must be separated one from another.

3. A man must fight long, and mightily
with himself, before he get the full vic-
tory over himself, and be able to draw
his whole heart in to God. When a man
trusteth in himself, he easily slideth unto
humane

humane comforts. But a true lover of Christ, and a diligent follower of virtue, takes not himself to [humane] comforts, nor seeketh such sensible sweetnesses, but rather hard exercises, and to sustain great labours for Christ.

4. When therefore spirituall comfort given thee from God, receive it thankfully: but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, glory not too much, neither do thou prevaile vainly; but be rather the more humble for that gift, and more wary and solicitous in all thine actions; for that labour will passe away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despair not presently; but with humility and patience wait for the heavenly visitation: for God is able again to give thee greater consolation. This is not new nor strange unto them that have experience in the way of God: for the great Saints and ancient Prophets had oftentimes experience of such kind of vicissitudes.

5. For which cause one under the enjoyment-

joyment of divine favour, said, *I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.* But in the want of this, he addeth what he found in himself, saying, *Thou turnedst thy face from me, and I became troubled.* Yet doth he not despair in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth unto the Lord, and saith, *Vnto thee, O Lord, I will cry, and I will pray unto my God.* Lastly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard, saying, *The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity on me: the Lord is become my helper.* But wherein *Thou hast turned*, saith he, *my sorrow into joy, and thou hast compassed me about with gladnesse.* If great Saints have been so dealt withall, we that are weak and poor ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent and sometimes cold: for the Spirit cometh & goeth, according to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Iob saith, *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him.*

6. Whercupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the o

hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enjoy the presence of good men, or religious brethren, or faithfull friends, or holy books, or excellent treatises, or sweet songs and hymns, all these help little, and have little favour, when grace forsaketh me, and I remain left in mine own poverty. At such a time there is no better remedy then patience, and the ordering of my self according to the will of God.

7. I never found any so religious and devout, that hath not had sometimes a withdrawing of grace, or felt not some decrease of zeale. There was never Saint so highly rapt, and illuminated, who first or last was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not been exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a signe of ensuing comfort. And unto those that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promised. *He that shall overcome, saith he, I will give him to eat of the tree of life..*

G

s. But

8. But divine comfort is given, that man may be stronger to bear adversities. There followeth also temptation, lest he should wax proud of any good. The devill sleepeth not, neither is the flesh as yet dead: therefore cease not to prepare thy self to the battel: for on thy right hand and on thy left are enemies that never rest.

CHAP. X.

Of thankfulness for the grace of God.

WHy seekest thou rest, since thou art born to labour? Dispose thy self to patience rather then to comforts: & to the bearing of the crosse, rather then to gladdnesse. What secular person is there that would not willingly receive spirituall joy and comfort, if he could alwayes have it? For spirituall comforts exceed all the delights of the world, and pleasures of the flesh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean: but spirituall delights are only pleasant and honest, sprung from vertue, and infused by God into pure minds. But no man can alwayes enjoy these divine

com

ok II
hat a
ities
ft he
e de
as ye
e th
d and
t.
od.
ou an
elf to
o the
glad
the
ll jo
hav
ll th
of th
vail
on
ve
ind
ivin
com

comforts according to his desire: for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. False freedome of mind, and great trust of our selves is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giving the grace of comfort; but man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are not thankfull to the giver, and return them not wholly to the head-fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is thankfull: and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I desire not that consolation that taketh from me compunction: nor do I affect that contemplation which leadeth to thoughtinesse of mind. For all that is high, is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good; nor every desire, pure; nor every thing that is dear unto us, is gratefull to God. I do willingly accept of that grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and affected with an holy fear, and

be made more ready to forsake my self. He that is taught by the gift of grace, and school'd by the scourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribute any good to himself, but will rather acknowledge himself poore and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, and ascribe unto thy self that which is thine own: that is, give thanks to God for his grace; and acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but onely sinne and the punishment due thereunto.

4. Set thy self alwayes in the lowest place, and the highest shall be given thee for the highest consist not without the lowest. The chiefeſt Saints before God are the least in their own judgements: and how much the more glorious, so much the humbler within themselves. Those that are full of truth and heavenly glory are not desirous of vain glory. Those that are firmly settled and grounded in God can no way be proud. And they that ascribe all unto God, what good soever they have received, seek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which

which is from God alone: and desire above all things to praise God in himself, and in all the Saints, and alwayes tend unto the same.

5. Be therefore thankfull for the least gift, so shalt thou be meet to receive greater. Let the least be unto thee also as the greatest, and the most contemptible as an speciall gift. If thou consider the worth of the giver, no gift will seem little, or too mean esteem. For it is not little that is given by the most high God. Yea, he should give punishment and stripes, ought to be gratefull; for that he doth it alwayes for our welfare, whatsoever he permitteth to happen unto us. He that desireth to keep the grace of God, let him be thankfull for the grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary and humble, lest he lose it.

C H A P. X I

Now few the lovers of the Crosse of Christ are.

Jesus hath now many lovers of his heavenly kingdome, but few bearers of his

Crosse. He hath many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abstinence. All desire to rejoyce with him, few will suffer any thing for him, [or with him.] Many follow Iesus unto the breaking of bread: but few to the drinking of the cup of his passion. Many reverence his miracles: few follow the ignominy of his Crosse. Many love Iesus as long as adversities happen not. Many praise and blesse him, as long as they receive any comforts from him. But if Iesus hide himself, and leave them but a while; they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Iesus for Iesus and not for some comfort of their own blesse him in all tribulation and anguish of heart, as well as in the greatest comfort. And although he should never give them comfort, they notwithstanding would ever praise him, and alwayes give him thanks.

3. O how powerfull is the pure love of Iesus, which is mixed with no self-love

not

or proper interest! Are not all those to be called hirelings, that ever seek comforts? Do they not shew themselves to be rather lovers of themselves then of Christ, that alwayes think of their own commoditie and gain? Where may one be found that will serve God freely?

4. It is hard to find any one so spirituall that is stript of [the love of] all [earthly] things. For where is any one to be found that is indeed poore in spirit, and free from all [affection of] creatures? Hee's a Jewell of such price as is scarce to be met with in these parts. If a man should give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should outwardly expresse great repentance, yet it is little. And if he should attain to all knowledge, he is yet farre off. And if he should be of great vertue, & very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting: to wit, one thing, which is most necessary for him. What is that? That leaving all, he forsake himself, and go wholly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love: And when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let

him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much which might be much esteemed; but according to truth let him affirm himself to be an unprofitable servant, as our Saviour hath said, *When you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.* Then may he be truly poore and naked in spirit, and say with the Prophet, I am alone & poore: yet no man richer, no man more powerfull, no man more free then he that can leave himself and all things, and set himself in the lowest place.

CHAP. XII.

Of the high way of the Holy Crosse.

UNTIL many this speech seemeth hard, *Denie thy self, take up thy Crosse, and follow Iesus.* But it will be much harder to hear that last word, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.* For they that now willingly hear and follow the word of the Crosse, shall not then fear to hear the sentence of everlasting damnation. This signe of the Crosse

Crosse shall be in heaven, when our Lord shall come to judgement. Then all the servants of the Crosse, who in their lifetime conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto Christ the Judge with great confidence.

2. Why therefore fearest thou to take up the Crosse, which leadeth thee to a Kingdome? In the Crosse is salvation, in the Crosse is life, in the Crosse is protection against our enemies, in the Crosse is infusion of heavenly sweetnesse, in the Crosse is strength of mind, in the Crosse is joy of spirit, in the Crosse is the height of vertue, in the Crosse is the perfection of sanctitie. There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of everlasting life but in the Crosse. Take up therefore thy Crosse and follow Iesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Crosse, and is dead for thee on the Crosse; that thou mayest also bear thy Crosse, and desire to dye on the Crosse [with him.] For if thou dyest with him, thou shalt also live with him. And if thou be his companion in pain, thou shalt be

be partaker with him also in glory.

3. Behold in the Crosse all doth consist, and all lyeth in our dying [upon it:] for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of the Holy Crosse, and of dayly mortification. Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, then the way of the Holy Crosse. Dispose & order all things according to thy will and judgement: yet thou shalt ever find, that of necessitie thou must suffer somewhat either willingly or against thy will, and so thou shalt ever find the Crosse. For either thou shalt feel pain in thy bodie, or in thy soul thou shalt suffer tribulation of spirit.

4. Sometimes thou shalt be forsaken of God, sometimes thou shalt be troubled by thy neighbours: and which is more oftentimes thou shalt be irksome to thy self: neither canst thou be delivered or eased by any remedy or comfort; but so long as pleaseth God, thou oughtest to bear it. For God will have thee learn to suffer tribulation without comfort; and that

that thou subject thy self wholly to him,
and become more humble by tribulation.
No man hath so cordiall a feeling of the
passion of Christ, as he who hath suffered
like himself. The Crosse therefore is
always readie, and everie where waits
for thee. Thou canst not escape it whi-
thersoever thou runnest: for wheresoever
thou goest, thou carriest thy self with
thee, and shalt ever find thy self: both a-
bove and below, without and within,
which way soever thou dost turn thee, e-
very where thou shalt find the Crosse: and
every where of necessitie thou must have
patience, if thou wilt have inward peace,
and enjoy an everlasting Crown.

5 If thou bear the Crosse willingly, it
will bear thee, and lead thee to thy desired
end, to wit, where there shall be an end
of suffering, though here there shall not.
If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest
for thy self a new burden, and encreasest
thy load, and yet notwithstanding thou
must bear it. If thou cast away one Crosse,
without doubt thou shalt find another,
and that perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Thin-

6. Thinkest thou to escape that which no man could ever avoid? which of the Saints in the world was without crosses and tribulation? Verily Iesus Christ our Lord was never one hour without pain of suffering, so long as he lived. *Christ* (saith he) *ought to suffer, and rise again from the dead, and so to enter into his glory.* Luke 24: and how dost thou seek any other way, then this high way, which is the way of the Holy Crosse?

7. The whole life of Christ was a Crosse and Martyrdome: and dost thou seek rest and joy? Thou art deceived, thou art deceived, if thou seekest any other thing then to suffer tribulations: for this whole mortall life is full of miseries, and environed on every side with crosses. And how much the more one hath profited in spirit, so much the heavier crosses he oftentimes findeth: for the love he beareth to God increaseth the grief which he endureth for his banishment.

8. But yet this man, though so many wayes afflicted, is not without some re-
fre-

esching comfort, for that he perceiveth much benefit to accrew unto him by the bearing of his Crosse. For whilest he willingly putteth himself under it, all the burden of tribulation is turned into the confidence of divine comfort. And how much the more the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace. And sometimes he is so comforted with the desire of tribulation and adversitie, for the love of conforming himself to the Crosse of Christ, that he would not wish any time to be without sorrow and tribulation: because he believeth that so much the more acceptable he shall be unto God, how much the more, and more grievous things he can suffer for him. This is not the power of man, but it is the grace of Christ, that can, and doth so much in frail flesh; that what naturally it alwayes abhorreth and flyeth, that by favour of spirit, it encounters with delight.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to bear the Crosse, to chastise and subdue the body, to flie honours, to suffer

fer contumelies with a willing heart, to despise himself and to wish to be despised, to bear all adversities and dammages, and to desire no prosperitie in this world. If thou considerest thy self, thou shalt be able to perform no such matter of thy self. But if thou trustest in the Lord, strength shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and flesh shall be made subject to thy command. Neither shalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed with faith, and bearest the Crosse of Christ.

10. Set therefore thy self, like a good and faithfull servant of Christ, to be manfully the Crosse of thy Lord, who was crucified for thee out of love. Prepare thy self to bear many adversities and divers kinds of troubles in this miserable life: for so it will be with thee, wheresoever thou be, and so surely thou wilt find it, wheresoever thou hide thy self. So it must be, and there is no remedie or mean to avoid tribulation and sorrow, but to bear them. Drink of the cup of our Lord heartily, if thou wilt be his friend,

and

and desirest to have part with him. As
for comforts, leave them to God: let him
do therein as shall best please him. Set
thy self to suffer tribulations, and ac-
count them the greatest comforts: for
that the sufferings of this life are not wor-
thy of the glory which is to come, al-
though thou alone could'st suffer them

11. When thou shalt come to this e-
state, that tribulation shall seem sweet and
labour unto thee for Christ: then thou
shalt think it is well with thee, for thou
shalt find a Paradise upon earth. As
long as it is grievous to thee to suffer, and
that thou desirest to flee it; so long shalt
thou be ill at ease: and the tribulation
thou flyest will follow thee every where.

12. If thou dost set thy self to that thou
oughtest, to wit, to suffer, and to die to
thy self, it will quickly be better with thee,
and thou shalt find peace. Although
thou shouldest have been rapt even unto
the third heaven with Paul, thou art not
for this secured that thou shalt suffer no
adversity. *I (saith Iesus) will shew him
how*

how great things he must suffer for my name. It remaineth therefore, that thou suffer, if thou wilt love Iesus, and perpetually serve him.

13. O that thou wert worthy to suffer something for the name of Iesus! how great glory would it be unto thee, what joy to all the Saints of God, how great edification also to thy neighbour! For we do commend patience, though few desire to suffer. With great reason thou oughtest to be willing to suffer a little for Christ, since many suffer farre greater things for the world.

14. Know for certain that thou oughtest to lead a dying life. And how much the more every one dieth to himself, so much the more doth he begin to live to God. No man is fit to attain unto heavenly things, unlesse he submit himself to the bearing of adversities for Christ. Nothing is more gratefull unto God, nothing more wholesome to thee in this world, then to suffer willingly for Christ. And if it were in thy choice, thou shouldest rather wish to suffer adversities for

Christ, then to enjoy the delight of many comforts : because hereby thou shouldest be more like unto Christ, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our worthinesse, and the proficiency of our spirituall estate consisteth not in many sweetnesse and comforts; but rather in suffering great afflictions and tribulations.

15. If there had been any better thing, and more profitable to the health of man when suffering, surely Christ would have shewed it by word and example. But he plainly exhorted all the Disciples that followed him, and all that desire to follow him, to the bearing of the Crosse, and saith, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Crosse, and follow me.* So that when we have read and searched all, let this be the last conclusion, *That by many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdome of God.*

H

THE

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.

*Of the inward speech of Christ unto
a faithfull soul.*



*L**Will hear what the Lord God will
speak in me.* Blessed is the soul
that heareth the Lord speak-
ing in her, and receiveth from
his mouth the word of comfort. Blessed
are those eares that receive the sound of
the divine voice, and listen not to the
whisperings of the world. Blessed indeed
are those eares that hearken not to the
voice which soundeth outwardly, but unto
the Truth which teacheth inwardly.
Blessed are the eyes that are shut to out-
ward things, but open to those things that
are internall. Blessed are they that enter
into the inward things, and endeavour to
prepare themselves more and more by
daily excercises to the attaining of heav-
enly secrets. Blessed be they that delight
to converse with God, and rid themselves
of all worldly impediments.

2. Consider these things, my soul, and
put up the doore of thy sensuall desires,
that thou maiest hear what thy Lord God
speaketh in thee. Thus saith thy Beloved,
I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life;
Keep thy self with me, and thou shalt find
peace. Leave all transitorie things, and
seek those that be everlasting. What are
all temporall things, but deceiving snares?
And what do all creatures avail thee, if
thou be forsaken by the Creatour? For-
ake therefore all earthly things and la-
bour to please thy Creatour, and be faith-
full unto him, that thou maiest attain un-
to the true happinesse.

C H A P. II.

*That Truth speaketh inwardly with-
out noise of words.*

CHRISTIAN. Speak Lord, for thy
servant heareth: I am thy servant,
grant me understanding, that I may know
thy testimonies. Incline my heart to the
words of thy mouth. Let thy speech di-
still as the dew [upon my soul.] The chil-
dren of Israel in times past said unto Mo-

ses, *Speak thou unto us, and we will hear thee: Let not the Lord speak unto us, lest we die.* Not so Lord, not so, I beseech thee. But rather with the Prophet Samuel, *humbly and earnestly intreat, Speak Lord for thy servant heareth.* Let not Moses speak unto me, nor any of the Prophets, but do thou rather speak, my Lord God the inspirer and enlightner of all the Prophets: for thou alone without them canst perfectly instruct me, but they without thee can profit nothing.

2. They indeed may sound forth words, but they cannot give spirit and life: they speak marvelous well, but, if thou be silent, they inflame not the hearts. They may teach the letter, but thou openest the sense. They bring forth mysteries, but thou unlockest the meanings of sealed things. They declare thy commandments, but thou helpst to fulfill them. They shew the way, but thou givest strength to walk in it. They work only exteriorly, but thou instructest and enlightnest the hearts. They watch outwardly, but thou givest fruitfulness.

They

They make a noise with words, but thou givest understanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore Moses speak unto me, but thou my Lord God, the everlasting Truth; lest I die, and prove unfruitfull, if I be warned outwardly onely, and not inflamed within; lest the word heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not observed, turne to my condemnation. Speak therefore Lord, for thy servant heareth, forthou hast the words of everlasting life. Speak unto me to the comfort of my soul, and to the amendment of my whole life, and to thy praise and glory, and everlasting honour.

C H A P. III.

That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.

CHRIST. Sonne, hear my words, words of greatest sweetness, exceeding all the knowledge of the Philosophers and wise men of this world. My words are *spirit and life*, not to be weigh-

ed by the understanding of man. They are not to be drawn to vain liking, but to be heard with silence, and to be received with all humility and great affection.

CHRISTIAN. And I said, Blessed is the man whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the evil dayes, and that he be not destroyed upon earth.

2. CHRIST. I (saith our Lord) have taught the Prophets from the beginning and cease not in these daies to speak to every one: but many are hardened and deaf to my speech. The greater number do more willingly listen to the world, than to God: and follow sooner the desires of their flesh, then the will of God. The world promiseth temporall and small things, and is served with great eagerness. I promise most high and eternall things, and the hearts of men are nothing moved therewith. Who is he that serveth and obeyeth me with equall care to that with which the world and the Lord thereof are served? *Blush O Sidon; saith*

the sea. And if thou ask the cause, hear wherefore: For a little Prebend a long journey is undertaken; for everlasting life many will scarce once lift a foot from the ground. A thing of small value is sought after greedily: for a peny sometimes there is foul contention: for a vain thing and sleight promise, men cease not to toil day and night.

3. But (alas) for an unchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honour and glory without end, they are loth to take the least pains. Blush therefore slothfull and complaining Servant, that they are found to be more ready to destruction, then thou to life. They rejoyce more in vanity then thou in the truth. And yet they are sometimes frustrated of their hope: but my promise deceiveth none, nor sendeth him away empty that trusteth in me. I will give that which I have promised, I will fulfill that which I have said; but to him that remains faithfull in my love to the end. I am the rewarder of all that are good, and do trie my devout servants with strong trialls.

4. Write my words in thy heart, & think diligently of them : for they will be very necessarie in time of temptation. What thou understandest not when thou readeſt, thou ſhalt know in the day of viſitation. I am wont to viſit my elect two ſeverall wayes, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I daily reade two leſſons unto them, one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increaſe of virtues. He that hath my words and deſpiſeth them, hath within himſelf that ſhall judge him at the laſt day.

A prayer to implore the grace of devotion.

5. O Lord my God, thou art to me whatſoever is good. Who am I, that dare ſpeak unto thee? I am thy pooreſt ſervant, and a moſt vile worm; much more poore and contemptible then I can or dare expreſſe. Remember yet O Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. Thou alone art good, juſt, and holy: thou canſt do all things, thou doeſt all things, thou filleſt all things, onely the ſinner thou ſendeſt empty away. Re-
mem-

member thy mercies, and fill my heart with thy grace, who wilt not that thy works be void and in vain.

6. How can I bear up my self in this miserable life, unlesse thou strengthen me with thy mercy and grace? Turn not thy face from me: delay not thy visitation; draw not away thy comfort, lest my soul become as the thirsty land unto thee. Lord, teach me to fulfill thy will; teach me to live worthily, and humbly in thy sight; for thou art my wisdom, thou dost truly know me, & didst know me before the world was made, and before I was born into the world.

C H A P. IV.

That we ought to live in truth and humility before God.

CHRIST. Sonne, walk before me in sincerity and truth; and ever seek me in simplicity of heart. He that walketh before me in truth, shall be defended from evil incursions, & the Truth shall deliver him from seducers, and from the detractions of the wicked. If the Truth shall

shall have made thee free, thou shalt be truly free, and shalt not care for the vain speeches of men.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, it is true. According as thou saidst, so I beseech thee let it be with me, let thy truth teach me, & keep me, and bring me safe to an happy end. Let it deliver me from all evil affection & inordinate love; & I shall walk with thee in great freedom of heart.

2. CHRIST. I will teach thee (saith the Truth) those things that are right and pleasing in my sight. Think of thy sinnes with great displeasure and grief, and never esteem thy self any thing for thy good works. Thou art in very deed a sinner, thou art subject to, and encumbered with, many passions. Of thy self thou alwayes tendest to nothing; thou art quickly cast down, quickly overcome, quickly troubled, quickly dissolved. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to despise thy self; for thou art much weaker then thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therefore let nothing seem much

much unto thee whatsoever thou doest. Let nothing seem great, nothing precious and wonderfull; let nothing seem worthy of estimation, nothing high, nothing truly commendable and to be desired, but that which is everlasting. Let the eternall Truth above all things please thee. Let thy own great unworthinesse alwayes displease thee. Fear nothing, blame and flie nothing so much as thy vices and sinnes; which ought to displease more then the losses of any thing whatsoever. Some walk not sincerely in my sight, but led by a certain curiositie and pride, will know my secrets, and understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves & their own salvation. These oftentimes, for that I resist them, do fall into great temptations and sinnes, for their pride and curiositie.

4. Fear the judgments of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty. But discusse not the works of the Highest. Search thine own iniquities, in how much thou hast offended, and how much good thou hast neglected. Some carry their religion
one-

onely in books, some in pictures, some in outward signes and figures. Some have me in their mouthes, but little in their hearts. There are others that being illuminated in their understanding, and purged in their affection do alwayes breath after things eternall, and are unwilling to hear of the things of this world, and do serve the necessities of nature with grief: and these perceive what the Spirit of truth speaketh in them: because it teacheth them to despise earthly, and love heavenly things; to neglect the world, and all the day and night to desire heaven.

CHAP. V.

Of the wonderfull effect of divine love.

CHRISTIAN. I praise thee O heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, for that thou hast vouchsafed to remember me a poore creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thanks be unto thee, who sometimes with thy comfort refreshest me unworthie of all comfort. I ever blesse and glorifie thee with thy onely begotten Sonne, and the
ho-

holy Ghost, for ever and ever. O Lord God, the holy lover of my soul, when thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me will rejoyce. Thou art my glory and the exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am yet weak in love, and imperfect in vertue, I have need therefore to be strengthened and comforted by thee : visit me therefore often, and instruct me with thy holy discipline. Deliver me from evil passions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being cured within and well purged, I may be made fit to love, strong to suffer, and constant to persevere.

3. Love is a great thing, in very truth a great good; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy, light; and beareth equally that which is unequall. For it carrieth a burden without a burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, sweet and savoury. The noble love of Iesus inforceth man to doe great things, and stirreth him up to desire alwayes what is most per-

perfect. Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any base thing. Love will be free and loose from all worldly affection, to the end it's inward sight be not prejudiced; that it be not either entangled by any temporall prosperity, or subdued by adversity. Nothing is sweeter then love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing more large, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven or in earth: because love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, above all creatures.

4. He that loveth; flyeth, runneth, and rejoyceth; he is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, for that he resteth in one Highest above all, from whence all good floweth and proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but is inflamed above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above it's strength, complaineth not of impossibility, for that it thinketh all things lawfull and possible.

It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth & bringeth many things to passe; whereas he that doth not love, fainteth and lies down.

5. Love watcheth, and sleeping slee-
peth not; being wearied, is not tired;
straightned, is not pressed; frightned, is
not troubled: but like a lively flame and
burning torch, breaketh upwards, and se-
curely passeth through all. If any one lo-
veth, he knoweth what this voice crieth;
A loud cry in the eares of God is the ar-
dent affection of the soul, which saith, *My*
God, my love, thou art wholly mine, and I
wholly thine.

Enlarge me in love, that with the in-
ward mouth of my heart I may taste how
sweet it is to love, and to be melted, and
swim in thy love. Let me be possessed by
love, mounting above my self with exces-
sive fervour and admiration. Let me sing
the song of love, let me follow thee on
high my beloved; let my soul rejoycing
through love, spend it self in thy praise.
Let me love thee more then my self, and
not my self but for thee, and all in thee
that

that truly love thee, as the law of love commandeth which shineth out from thee.

7. Love is swift, sincere, pious, pleasant and delightfull, strong, patient, faithfull, prudent, long suffering, manly, and never seeking it self. For where one seeketh himself, there he falleth from love. Love is circumspect, humble, and upright: not softly, nor light, not attending unto vain things; sober, chaste, constant, quiet, and guarded in all the senses. Love is subject and obedient to Superiours, mean and abject to it self, devout and thankfull unto God, trusting and hoping alwayes in him, even then when God imparteth no sweetnesse unto it: for without sorrow none liveth in love.

8. He that is not ready to suffer all things, and stand to the will of his beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover. A lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and distastefull for his beloved; & not to turn away from him for any contrary accidents.

CHAP. VI.

Of the proof of a true Lover.

CHRIST. Sonne, thou art not yet
A strong and prudent lover. CHRISTIAN. Wherefore Lord? CHRIST. Because thou givest over for a small adversity, and too greedily seekest comfort. A strong lover standeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty persuasions of the enemy. As I please him in prosperity, so I am not unpleasant to him in adversity.

2. A prudent lover considereth not so much the gift of his lover, as the love of the giver. He rather esteemeth the good will then the value, and placeth all gifts under his beloved. A noble lover refterh not in the gift, but in me above every gift. All therefore is not lost if sometimes thou hast lesse taste of me then thou wouldest. That good and sweet affection which thou sometimes feelest, is the effect of present grace, and a certain fore-taste of the heavenly Countrey; whereon thou must not rely too much, for it goeth and cometh

meth. But to fight against evil motions of the mind which may happen unto thee, and to despise the suggestions of the devil, is a notable signe of virtue and shall have great reward.

3. Let not therefore strange fancies forced into thee, of any matter whatsoever, trouble thee. Retain a strong purpose and an upright intention to God. Neither is it an illusion that sometimes thou art suddenly rapt on high, and presently returnest again unto the accustomed vanities of thy heart. For thou dost rather unwillingly suffer them, then commit them: and as long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is matter of reward, and no losse.

4. Know that thy ancient enemy doth ever strive to hinder thy desire to good, and to divert thee from all religious exercise: to wit, from the devout memory of my passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sinnes, from the guard of thine own heart, and from the firm purpose of profiting in virtue. He injecteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that
he

he may cause a wearisomnesse and hor-
rour in thee, to draw thee from prayer
and holy reading. Humble confession is
displeasing unto him; & if he could, he
would cause thee to cease from receiving
the Sacrament. Trust him not, nor care
for him, although he should often set
snares of deceit to intrap thee. Charge
him with it when he suggesteth evil and
unclean thoughts unto thee; Say unto
him, Away unclean spirit, blush miserable
wretch; thou art very unclean that bring-
est such things unto mine ears. Away
from me wicked deceiver, thou shalt have
no part in me: but Jesus shall be
with me as a strong warriour, and thou
shalt stand confounded. I had rather die,
and undergo any torment, then consent
unto thee. Hold thy peace and be silent;
I will hear thee no more, though thou
shouldest work me many troubles. The
Lord is my light and my salvation, whom
shall I fear? If whole armies should stand
together against me, my heart shall not
fear: The Lord is my helper and my re-
deemer.

5. Fight like a good souldier: and if thou sometimes fall through frailty, take greater strength then before, trusting in my more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self & of pride. This brings many into errour, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable blindnesse. Let the fall of the proud, foolishly presuming of themselves, serve thee for a warning, and keep thee perpetually humble.

CHAP. VII.

That grace is to be hid under the vail of humility.

CHRIST. Sonne, it is more profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of devotion; not to extoll thy self nor to speak much, nor to esteem much thereof: but rather to despise thy self, and fear it, as given to one unworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaved unto which may be quickly changed unto the contrary. Think when thou art in grace how miserable and needy thou art wont to be without grace. Neither doth there

in onely consist the proficiency of a spirituall life, when thou hast the grace of comfort; but when thou humbly, selfdenyingly and patiently sufferest the withdrawing thereof: so that thou be not then lesse diligent in the exercise of prayer, nor suffer the rest of thy accustomed duties to be neglected; but that thou willingly perform what lieth in thee, according to the best of thy power and understanding: not neglecting thy self wholly for the drynesse and trouble of mind which thou feelest.

2. There are many that when it succeedeth not well with them, presently they become impatient or slothfull. The way of man is not alwayes in his power, but it belongeth to God to give and to comfort when he will, and how much he will, and whom he will; as it shall please him, and no more. Some unadvised persons have overthrown themselves for [the greedy desire which they had of] the grace of devotion; attempting more then they were able to perform, not weighing the measure of their weaknesse,

but following rather the desire of their heart, then the judgement of reason. And because they presumed on greater matters then was pleasing to God, they quickly lost his grace. They became needy, and left in a dejected estate, that built themselves nests in heaven: to the end that being humbled and impoverished, they might learn not to flie with their own wings, but to trust under my wings. They that are yet but novices and unacquainted in the way of the Lord, unlesse they govern themselves by the counsell of discreet persons, may easily be deceived and overthrown.

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgement, then give credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they will not be drawn from their own conceit. Seldome those that are self-wise suffer themselves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledge with humility, and a slender understanding, is better then great treasures of learning with a vain self-liking. It is better for thee to have little then much
of

of that whereof thou maist be proud. He doth not discreetly, that wholly giveth himself over to mirth, forgetting his former poverty, and the chaste fear of God, which feareth to lose the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he virtuously wise, that in time of adversity or any tribulation whatsoever, yieldeth to despairing thoughts, and thinketh and imagineth of me lesse confidently then he ought.

4. He that will be over secure in time of peace, shall be often found in time of warre too dejected and fearfull. If thou couldest alwaies continue humble and lowly within thy self, and order and govern thy spirit well, thou shouldest not so soon fall into danger and offence. It is good counsell, that when fervour of spirit is kindled within thee, thou shouldest think what will become of thee, when that light shall leave thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may return again, which for thy instruction and my glory I have with-drawn for a time.

5. Such proofis often more profitable,

ble, then if thou shouldest alwayes enjoy prosperity according to thy desire. For a mans worthineffe is not to be judged by the number of visions & comforts which he hath, or by his knowledge in Scripture, or by his being placed in high degree; but in that he is grounded in true humility, and filled with divine love; if he alwayes purely and entirely seek the honour of God, if he esteem himself nothing, and unfeinedly despise himself, and rejoyce more to be despised and humbled by others, then to be honoured.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a mean conceit of our selves in the sight of God.

CHRISTIAN. Shall I speak unto my Lord sith I am dust and ashes? If I esteem better of my self, behold thou standest against me, and my iniquities bear true witnesse [against me]: neither can I speak against it. But if I abase and esteem nothing of my self, and cast off all self-esteem, and (as I am) account my self to be dust; thy grace will be favourable unto me,

me, and thy light will be near unto my heart; and all self-esteem, how little soever, shall be swallowed up in the deep valley of my nothingness, and perish everlastingly. There thou shewest my self unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come; for I am nothing, and I knew it not. And if I be left to my self, behold I become nothing but mere weakness. But if thou suddenly look upon me, I am presently made strong, and filled with new joy. And it is a great marvel, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously embraced by thee, that of mine own weight alwaies sink downward.

2. Thy love is cause hereof, freely preventing me, and relieving me in so many necessities, preserving me also from grievous dangers, and delivering me (as I may truly say) from innumerable evils. For surely by inordinate loving my self, I lost my self: and by seeking thee alone, and purely loving thee, I have found both my self and thee, and by that love have more deeply brought my self to nothing. For that thou, O most sweet Lord, dearest

lest with me above all desert, and above all that I dare hope and request.

3. Blessed be thou my God; for although I be unworthy of any benefits, yet the noblenesse of thy bountie and thy infinite goodnesse never ceaseth to do good even to the ungratefull, & to them that be turned away far from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be thankfull, humble, and holy; for thou art our safetie, our power, and our strength.

CHAP. IX.

That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.

CHRIST. Sonne, I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desirest to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to it self and unto creatures. For if in any thing thou seekest thy self, thou presently faintest and driest up within thy self. Referre therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that have given all. Consider every

ry thing as flowing from the highest good; and therefore all things are to be reduced unto me as unto their Originall.

2. Out of me, as out of a living fountain, the little and the great, the poor and the rich, do draw the water of life: and they that willingly and freely serve me, shall receive grace for grace. But he that will glorie out of me, or be delighted in any particular good, shall not be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but shall be many waies encumbred and straitned. Thou oughtest therefore to ascribe nothing of good unto thy self, nor attribute goodnesse unto any man: but give all unto God, without whom man hath nothing. I have bestowed all, and will that all be returned to me again: and with great strictnesse I require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain glory. And if heavenly grace and true love enter in, there shall be no envie nor straitnesse of heart, neither shall there be any place for self-love. For divine love overcometh all, and enlargeth all

all the powers of the soul. If thou beest truly wise, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: for none is good, but God alone, who is to be praised above all things, and to be blessed in all.

CHAP. X.

That the world being despised, it is a sweet thing to serve God.

CHRISTIAN. Now I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent, I will say in the cares of my God, my Lord, and my King that is on high, *Psal. 31. 0 how great is the abundance of thy goodnesse O Lord, which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee!* But what art thou to them that love thee? What to them that serve thee with their whole heart? Truly unspeakable is the sweetnesse of contemplating thee, which thou bestowest on them that love thee. In this chiefly thou hast shewed me the sweetnesse of thy love, for that when I was not, thou madest me; and when I went astray far off from thee, thou broughtest me back again, that I might

might serve thee, and hast commanded me to love thee.

2. O fountain of everlasting love, what shall I say of thee? How can I forget thee, that hast vouchsafed to remember me, even when I wasted away, and perished? Thou hast shewed mercie to thy servant beyond all my expectation: and hast exhibited thy favour and friendship beyond all merit. What shall I return unto thee for this grace? For it is not granted to every one to forsake all things, to renounce the world, and to undertake a life of religious retirednesse. Is it much that I should serve thee, whom all creatures are bound to serve? It ought not to seem much unto me, to serve thee: but this rather seemeth much and marvellous unto me, that thou vouchsafest to receive into thy service one so poor and unworthy, and to joyn him with thy beloved servants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I have, and whereby I serve thee. And yet contrariwise thou rather servest me then I thee. Behold, heaven and earth, which
thou

thou hast created for the service of man, are ready at hand, and do daily perform whatsoever thou dost command; and this is little: yea, thou hast also appointed the Angels to the service of man. But that which excelleth all this, is, that thou thy self hast vouchsafed to serve man, and hast promised to give thy self unto him.

What shall I give thee for all these thousands of benefits? I would I could serve thee all the dayes of my life! I would I were able at least for one day, to do thee some worthy service! Thou art truly worthy of all service, of all honour, and everlasting praise. Thou art truly my Lord, and I thy poore servant, that am bound to serve thee with all my might, neither ought I ever to be weary of praising thee. And this I wish to do, this I desire: and whatsoever is wanting unto me, vouchsafe I beseech thee to supply.

5. It is a great honour, a great glory to serve thee, and despise all things for thee. For great grace shall be given to them that shall willingly subject themselves to thy

thy most holy service. They shall receive the most sweet comfort of the holy Ghost, that for thy love shall renounce all carnall delights. They shall attain great freedome of mind, that for thy names sake shall enter into the narrow way, & shall have left off all worldly care.

6. O sweet and delightfull service of God, by which man is truly made free and holy! O sacred state of religious employment, which maketh man equall to Angels, pleasing to God, terrible to devils, gratefull and of great esteem to all the faithfull! O service to be imbraced and alwayes wished for, by which we obtain the greatest good, and attain to that joy which never shall have end!

CHAP. XI.

That the desires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.

CHRIST. Sonne, thou oughtest to learn many things more, which thou hast not yet well learned.

CHRISTIAN. What are those, Lord?

CHRIST

CHRIST. That thou frame thy desires wholly according to my pleasure ; and be not a lover of thy self, but an affectionate follower of my will. Thy desires oftentimes enflame thee, and drive thee forwards with violence: but consider whether thou art moved rather for my honour, then for thine own profit. If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoever I shall ordain : but if there lurk in thee any self-seeking, behold this is it that hindereth thee and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou lean not too much upon thy own preconceived desire, without asking my counsel, lest perhaps afterwards it repent thee, and thou begin now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestly desiredst as the best. For every affection that seemeth good is not presently to be followed: nor every contrary affection at the first to be avoided. It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint even in good desires and endeavours, lest by importunity thou incurre distraction of

mind

mind, and by thy want of self-government beget a scandall unto others; or being gainsaid by others, thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensuall appetites, and respect not what the flesh would, or would not; but rather to labour that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastised so long, and to be forced under servitude, untill it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with plaine things, and not to murmur against any inconvenience.

CHAP. XII.

Of Patience, and of striving against concupiscence.

CHRISTIAN. Lord God, I perceive patience is very necessary unto me; for that many adversities do happen in this life. For howsoever I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without war and affliction.

CHRIST. So it is Sonne. And my
K will

will is not that thou seek after that peace which is void of temptations, or that which feeleth no contrariety; but then think that thou hast found peace, when thou art exercised with sundry tribulations, and tried in many adversities.

2. If thou say, that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire hereafter? of two evils the lesse is alwaies to be chosen. That thou maist therefore avoid everlasting punishment in the next world, endeavour to suffer patiently for God the present evils of this. Doeſt thou think that the men of this world suffer little or nothing? Look into the life even of them that live in greatest delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwise. But thou wilt say, They have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make small account of their tribulations: Be it so, that they have whatsoever they will; but how long dost thou think it will last?

3. Behold, the wealthy of this world vanish away like smoke, and there shall be no memorie of their joyes past. Yea, even

even while they live also, they rest not in them without bitterneſſe, irkſomneſſe and fear. For the ſelf-ſame thing in which they take their delight, is oftentimes unto them the cauſe of ſorrow. They have their deſert, who for that they inordinate-ly ſeek and follow delights, they do not enjoy them but with ſhame and ſorrow.

4. O how ſhort and falſe, how inordinate and filthy are all thoſe pleaſures! Yet ſo drunken and blind are men that they underſtand it not: but like dumbe beaſts, for a little pleaſure of a corruptible life, they incurre the [eternall] death of their ſoul. Do not thou therefore my Son, go after thy luſts, but forſake thine own will. *Pſal. 37. Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee the deſires of thy heart.*

5. For if thou deſire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me; behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and in the cutting off all baſe delights ſhall be thy bleſſing, and abundant comforts ſhall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdraweſt thy ſelf from all comfort of creatures, ſo much

the sweeter and more powerfull consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attain unto them without some sorrow, nor without a laborious conflict. Thy old custome will make resistance, and thou must overcome it with another custome that is better. Thy flesh will murmur; but thou must bridle it with fervour of spirit. The old serpent will sting and trouble thee: but by prayer he shall be put to flight, and by profitable industry thou shalt stop the way against him.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the humble obedience of a subject, according to the example of Christ.

CHRIST. Sonne, he that endeavoureth to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraweth himself from grace. And he that seeketh things private, shall lose the publick. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himself to his Superiour, it is a signe that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes kicketh and murmureth against him.

him. Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy Superiour, if thou desirest to subdue thine own flesh. For the outward enemy is sooner overcome, if the inward man be not wasted. There is no worse enemy, nor more troublesome to the soul, then thou art unto thy self, not agreeing well with the spirit. Thou must of necessity have a true contempt of thy self, if thou wilt prevail against flesh and blood.

2. Because thou lovest thy self as yet too inordinately, therefore thou art afraid to resign thy self wholly to the will of others. But what great matter is it, if thou, that art dust and nothing, submit thy self to a man for God, when I the Almighty and highest Sovereigne who created all things of nothing, humbly submitted my self unto man for thee? I became the most humble and abject of all men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride with my humility. Learn to obey thou that art dust. Learn to humble thy self thou earth and clay, and put thy self under the feet of all men. Learn to break thine own

will, and to yield thy self to all subjection.

3. Be vehement against thy self, and suffer not pride to live in thee: but so humble and submit thy self to all, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as dirt of the streets under their feet. Vain man, what canst thou complain of? what canst thou answer, foul sinner, to them that reprove thee, who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved hell? But mine eye hath spared thee, because thy soul was precious in my sight; that thou mightest know my love, and alwaies remain thankfull for my benefits; and that thou mightest continually give thy self to true subjection and humility, and mightest bear patiently the contempt of thy self.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the secret judgements of God to be considered, lest we be extolled in our good deeds.

CHRISTIAN. Thou thunderest forth thy judgements over me, O Lord, and shakest all my bones with fear and

and trembling, and my soul is sore afraid. I stand astonish'd, when I consider that the heavens are not pure in thy sight. If thou hast found wickednesse in Angels, and hast not pardoned them, what shall become of me? Starres fell from heaven, and what do I presume that am dust? They whose works seem'd commendable, fell into the lowest misery: and I have seen them, that did eat the bread of Angels, to be delighted with the husks of swine.

2. There is therefore no sanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdrawest thy hand. No wisdom availeth, if thou cease to govern. No strength helpeth, if thou leave to defend. No chastitie is secure, if thou dost not protect it. No custodie of our own profitable, if thy sacred watchfulness be not present. For, if we be left of thee, we sink and perish: but if thou vouchsafest to visit us, we are raised up and live. We are inconstant, but by thee we are established: we wax cold, but by thee we are enflamed.

3. O how meanly and humbly ought

I to think of my self! how little, yea nothing ought I to esteem it, if I seem to have any good! O Lord with what profound humility ought I to submit my self to thy bottomlesse Judgements: where I find my self to be nothing else, but nothing, and nothing! O unmeasurable weight! O sea that can never be passed over, where I find my self onely & wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking-hole of glory? Where is the confidence conceived of virtue? All vain-glorying is swallowed up in the deepe of thy judgements over me.

4. What is all flesh in thy sight? Shall the clay glory against him that frameth it? How can he be lifted up with vain words, whose heart is truly subject to God? All the world cannot lift him up, whom the Truth hath subjected unto it self; neither shall he be moved with the tongues of all his praisers, that hath settled his whole hope in God. For as for them that speak, behold, they all are nothing: they shall passe away with the sound of their words: but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

CHAP.

C H P. XV.

*How we are to stand affected, and what we
are to say, in every thing
which we desire.*

CHRIST. Sonne, say thus in every thing, Lord, if it be pleasing unto thee, let this be done in this sort; Lord, if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name; Lord, if thou seest it expedient for me, and allowest it to be profitable, then grant unto me, that I may use this unto thine honour. But if thou knowest it will be hurtfull unto me, & not profitable to the health of my soul, take away this desire from me. For every desire proceedeth not from the holy Ghost, though it seem unto man right and good. It is hard to judge rightly whether a good Spirit or the contrary drive thee to desire this or that; or whether also by thine own Spirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the first seemed to be led by a good Spirit.

2. Alwayes therefore, whatsoever
occurrerh unto thy mind to be desired,
let

let it be desired and prayed for in the fear of God and with humilitie of heart : and above all thou oughtest to commit the whole unto me with resignatiō of thyself, & thou oughtest to say, Lord thou knowest what is best, let this or that be done as thou pleasest. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Deale with me as thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth thee, and is most for thy honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again which way soever thou please. Behold I am thy servant, prepared for all things : for I desire nor to live unto my self, but unto thee: and O that I could do it worthily and perfectly !

*A prayer for the fulfilling of the
will of God.*

3. Grant me thy grace O most gracious Iesus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and persevere with me untill the end. Grant me alwayes to desire
and

and will that which is most acceptable unto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will ever follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine, and let me not will or nill any thing else, but what thou willest or nillest.

4. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the world, and to love to be condemned for thy sake, and not to be known in this world. Grant that above all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and may quiet my heart in thee. Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the only rest; out of thee all things are troublesome and unquiet. In this very peace, that is, in thee, the one chiefest eternall Good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

CHAP. XVI.

*That true comfort is to be sought in
God alone.*

WHatsoever I can desire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it here, but hereafter. For if I should alone have

have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the delights thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure. Wherefore my soul, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the comforter of the poore, and the helper of the humble. Expect a while, O my soul, expect the divine promise, and thou shalt have abundance of all good things in heaven. If thou desire inordinately the things that are present, thou shalt lose the celestiall and eternall. Use temporall things, and desire eternall. Thou canst not be filled with any temporall goods, because thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou shouldst enjoy all created good, yet couldst thou not be happy thereby nor blessed; but in God, that hath created all things, thy whole beatitude and happinesse consisteth; not such as is seen, and commended by the foolish lovers of the world, but such as the good and faithfull servants of Christ expect, and the spirituall and pure in heart, whose conversation is in heaven, sometimes have

have a fore-taste of. Vain and short is all humane comfort. Blessed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from the Truth. A Religious man every where carrieth with him Iesus his comforter, and saith unto him, Be present with me Lord Iesus, in every place and time. Let this be my comfort, to be willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and just proving of me be unto me as the greatest comfort: for thou wilt not be angry alwaies, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

CHAP. XVII.

*That all our care is to be placed in
God.*

CHRIST. Sonne, suffer me to doe with thee what I please. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkest as man; thou judgest in many things as humane affection perswadeth thee.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what thou sayest is true. Thy care for me is greater then all the care that I can take for my self. For he standeth very totteringly, that casteth

steth not his whole care upon thee. Lord, so that my will may remain right and firm towards thee, do with me whatsoever it shall please thee. For it cannot be but good whatsoever thou doest with me.

2. If it be thy will I should be in darknesse, be thou blessed : and if it be thy will I should be in light, be thou again blessed. If thou vouchsafest to comfort me, be thou blessed : and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou ever equally blessed.

CHRIST. Sonne, Thus thou oughtest to be minded, if thou wilt walk with me, Thou must be as ready to suffer, as to rejoyce. Thou oughtest to be as willing to be poor and needy, as full and rich.

3. CHRISTIAN. Lord , I will willingly suffer for thee, whatsoever thy pleasure is shall befall me. I will receive indifferently from thy hand good and evil, sweet and sowre , delightfull and sorrowfull; and give thee thanks for all that befallerh me. Keep me from all sinne, and I will neither fear death nor hell: so as thou dost not for ever cast me from thee, nor blot me out of the book of life, what

tribulations soever befall me shall not hurt me.

CHAP. XVIII.

That temporall miseries, after the example of Christ, must be borne patiently.

CHRIST. Sonne, I descended from Heaven for thy Salvation: I took upon me thy miseries, my own love and not any necessity drawing me thereunto; that thou mightest learn patience, and not grudgingly bear temporall miseries. For from the houre of my birth, untill my death on the crosse, I was not without suffering of grief. I suffered great want of temporall things: I often heard many complaints against me: I bare patiently shame and reproches: for benefits I received ingratitude; for miracles, blasphemies: for heavenly doctrine, reprehensions.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord, for that thou wert patient in thy life-time, chiefly fulfilling herein the commandment of thy Father: it is reason that I a miserable sinner should shew my self patient according

ding to thy will, and for my soul's wellfare bear the burden of this corruptible life as long as thou wilt. For although this present life be burdensome, yet notwithstanding it is now by thy grace made very gainfull; and by thy example and the footsteps of thy Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable also then it was in times past in the old Law, when the gate of heaven remained shut, and the way also to heaven seemed darker, when so few took care to seek after thy Kingdome. Neither they also that then were just and such as should be saved, could enter into the heavenly Kingdome, before the satisfaction of thy holy passion and death.

3. O how many and great thanks am I bound to render unto thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to shew unto me and to all the faithfull a direct and sure way to thy everlasting Kingdome! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we go unto thee that art our Crown. If thou hadst not gone before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow? Alas! how

how many would stay behind and remain farre off, if they beheld not thy noble example ! Behold we are yet cold, although we have heard of so many of thy wonders, and thy [heavenly] documents : what would become of us, if we had not so great a light [given us] to follow thee ?

CHAP. XIX.

Of suffering of injuries : and who is proved to be truly patient.

CHRIST. What is it thou sayest, Sonne ? Cease to complain, considering my passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance unto bloud. It is but little thou sufferest, in comparison of them that have suffered so much, were so strongly tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many wayes tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to mind the more heavy sufferings of others, that thou mayest the easier bear the little adversities which thou sufferest. And if they seem not little unto thee, beware lest thy impatience be cause thereof. Yet whether they be little or

L

great,

great, endeavour to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou dost thyself to suffering, so much the more wisely thou doest, and so much the greater reward shalt thou receive: thou shalt more easily also endure it, if both in mind and by exercise thou art well prepared thereunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things at the hands of such a person, nor, such things are not to be suffered by me; for he hath done me great wrong, & upbraided me with those things which I never thought of: but of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned; but rather weigheth the persons, and the injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But the true patient man mindeth not by whom he is exercised; whether by his Superiours, or some of his equals, or by his inferiours: whether by a good and holy man, or by a perverse and unworthy person.

son. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversitie befalleth him, he taketh all this thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a grear gain: for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, shall passe without its reward.

4. Be thou therefore alwaies prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have thy victorie. Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently. Without labour there is no coming to rest, nor without fighting can the victory be obtained.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer but little, and that I am quickly dismayed, when a small adversitie ariseth. Let every exercise of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcome for thy name; for

great, endeavour to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou dost thy self to suffering, so much the more wisely thou doest, and so much the greater reward shalt thou receive: thou shalt more easily also endure it, if both in mind and by exercise thou art well prepared thereunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things at the hands of such a person, nor, such things are not to be suffered by me; for he hath done me great wrong, & upbraided me with those things which I never thought of: but of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned; but rather weigheth the persons, and the injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But the true patient man mindeth not by whom he is exercised; whether by his Superiours, or some of his equals, or by his inferiours: whether by a good and holy man, or by a perverse and unworthy person.

son. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversitie befalleth him, he taketh all this thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a grear gain: for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, shall passe without its reward.

4. Be thou therefore alwaies prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have thy victorie. Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently. Without labour there is no coming to rest, nor without fighting can the victory be obtained.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer but little, and that I am quickly dismayed, when a small adversitie ariseth. Let every exercise of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcome for thy name; for

to suffer and to be troubled for thy sake, is very profitable for my soul.

CHAP. XX.

Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities: and of the miseries of this life.

CHRISTIAN. I will confesse against me my unrighteousness, I will confesse unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities. Oftentimes it is a small matter that dejecteth and grieveth me. I purpose to act with courage, but when a small temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow straits. It is sometimes a very trifling, from whence great temptations do proceed. And whilst I think my self somewhat safe, when I least expect it, I find my self sometimes overcome with a small blast.

2. Behold therefore, Lord, my lowliness and frailty every way known unto thee. Have mercy on me and deliver me out of the mire that I stick not fast therein, and that I may not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftentimes strikes me at the very heart, and confounds me

in thy fight, for that I am so subject to fall, and weak in resisting of my passions. And although I do not altogether consent, yet their continuall assaults are troublesome and grievous unto me: and it is a very irksome thing to live thus daily in conflict. Hereby my infirmity is made known unto me, for that wicked fancies do alwaies much more easily invade then forsake me.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous lover of faithfull souls, let it please thee to consider the labour and sorrow of thy servant, and assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with heavenly strength, lest the old man, the miserable flesh, not fully as yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which I ought to fight as long as I breath in this miserable life. Alas, what a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting! where all is full of snares, and enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another cometh; yea and during the first conflict also, many

others come unlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life be loved that hath so many embitterments, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life that begetteth so many deaths and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many seek to delight themselves therein. The world is oftentimes blamed that it is deceitfull and vain, and yet it is not easily forsaken, because the desires of the flesh bear so great a sway.

Some things draw us to love it, others to condemn it. To the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life do draw us : but the pains and miseries that do justly follow them, cause a hatred and lothsomnesse thereof.

5. But alas ! vile pleasure overcometh the mind which is addicted to the world; and she esteemeth it a delight to be even under thorns, because she hath neither seen nor tasted the sweetnesse of God, and the inward pleasantnesse of virtue. But they that perfectly contemne the world,

world, and endeavour to live to God under holy discipline, these are not ignorant of the divine sweetnesse promised to the true forsakers of the world, and do more clearly see how grievously the world erreth, and how it is many wayes deceived.

CHAP. XXI.

That we are to rest in God above all his gifts, and benefits.

CHRISTIAN. Above all things, and in all things, O my soul, thou shalt ever rest in the Lord, for he is the everlasting rest of the Saints. Grant me, O most sweet and loving Jesus, to rest in thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and subtlety, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladnesse, above all fame and praise, above all sweetnesse and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all desert and desire, above all gifts and presents that thou canst give and impart unto us, above all mirth

and jubilee that the mind of man can receive and feel: lastly, above Angels and Archangels and above all the heavenly host, above all visible and invisible things, and above all that thou art not, O my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, art best of all : thou alone art most high, thou alone most powerfull, thou alone most full and sufficient, thou alone most sweet and solacing, thou alone most lovely and loving, thou alone most noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things together both perfectly are, and ever have been, and shall be : and therefore it is too little and not sufficient, whatsoever thou bestowest on me besides thy self, or revealest unto me of thy self, or promisest, whilst thou art not seen, and not fully obtained : for surely my heart cannot truly rest nor be fully contented, unlesse it rest in thee, and surmount all gifts and creatures whatsoever.

3. O my most beloved Bridegroom Iesus Christ, the most pure lover, the giver-

vernour of all creatures; O that I had the wings of true liberty that I might flie and rest in thee! O when shall it be fully granted me to consider in quietnesse of mind and see how sweet thou art, my Lord God! When shall I fully gather up my self into thee, that by reason of my love to thee I may not feel my self, but thee alone, above all sense and feeling, in a manner not known unto every one! But now I oftentimes sigh, and bear my infelicity with grief; for that many evils occur in this vale of miseries, which do often trouble, grieve, and overcloud me; often hinder and distract me, allure and intangle me, so that I can have no free access unto thee, nor enjoy thy sweet embracings wherewith thou ever favourest the blessed Spirits. O let my sighs and manifold desolations on earth affect thee.

4. O Iesus, the brightnesse of eternall glory, and comfort of the pilgrime-soul, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my very silence speaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come?

Let

Let him come unto me his poor servant, and make me glad. Let him put forth his hand and deliver miserable me from all anguish. Come, O come; for without thee I shall have no joyfull day nor hour: for thou art my joy, and without thee my table is empty. A wretched creature I am, and in a manner imprisoned and loaden with irons, untill thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence, and settest me at libertie, & shewest a friendly countenance unto me.

5. Let others seek what they please in stead of thee: but for me, nothing else doth nor shall delight me, but thou only my God, my hope, my everlasting salvation. I will not hold my peace, nor cease to pray, untill thy grace return again, and thou speak inwardly unto me.

CHRIST. Behold I am here: behold I come unto thee, because thou hast called upon me. Thy tears and the desire of thy soul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee.

CHRISTIAN. And I said, Lord, I have

have called thee, and have desired to enjoy thee, being ready to refuse all things for thee. For thou first hast stirred me up that I might seek thee. Blessed be thou therefore, O Lord, that hast shewed this goodnesse to thy servant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy servant more to say before thee, but that he do greatly humble himself in thy sight, alwaies mindfull of his own iniquity, and vilenesse? For there is none like unto thee in all whatsoever is wonderfull in heaven and earth. Thy works are very good, thy judgements true, and by thy providence all things are governed. Praise therefore and glory be unto thee, O wisdom of the Father: let my mouth, my soul, and all creatures together praise and blesse thee.

C H A P. XXII.

Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.

CHRISTIAN. Open, O Lord, my heart in thy Law, and teach me to walk in thy Commandments. Grant me

me to understand thy will, and to remember thy benefits, as well in generall, as in particular, with great reverence and diligent consideration; that henceforward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. But I know, and confesse, that I am not able in the least point to give thee due thanks, for the favours which thou bestowest upon me. I am lesse then the least of all thy benefits: and when I consider thy noble bounty, the greatnesse thereof maketh my spirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our soul and body, and whatsoever we possesse outwardly or inwardly, naturally or supernaturally, are thy benefits, and do speak thee bountifull, mercifull, and good, from whom we have received all good things. Although one have received more, another lesse; all notwithstanding are thine, and without thee even the least cannot be had. He that hath received greater, cannot glory of his own desert, nor extoll himself above others, nor insult over the lesser: for he is greater and better that ascribeth least unto himself, and is
more

more humble and religious in rendering thanks. And he that esteemeth himself vilest of all men, & judgeth himself most unworthy, is fittest to receive great blessings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be sorry nor take it grievously, nor envie them that are enriched with greater store; but attend rather unto thee, and highly praise thy goodnesse, for that thou bestowest thy gifts so bountifully, so freely, and so willingly without respect of persons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praised. Thou knowest what is fit to be given to every one; and why this man hath lesse, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to judge, who dost exactly know what is meet for every one.

4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I esteem it as a great mercie, not to have much of that which outwardly and in the opinion of men, might seem worthy of glory and applause: so that he who considereth the poverty and unworthinesse of his person, ought not therefore to conceive grief
or

or sorrow, or to be therefore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, & to be glad: for that thou O God hast chosen the poore & humble and the despised of this world for thy self, & for thy familiar and domestick attendants. Witnesses are thy Apostles themselves, whom thou hast made Princes in all the earth. And yet they lived without complaint in the world, so humble and simple, without all malice and deceit, that they also rejoyced to suffer reproch for thy name, and what the world abhorreth, they embraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoyce him that loveth thee and acknowledgeth thy benefits, as thy will in him, and the good pleasure of thy eternall appointment; wherewith he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the greatest, & as peaceable and contented in the last as in the first place: and as willing to be despised & contemned and to be of no esteem or account, as to be preferred in honour before all others & to be

III.
ed,
o be
ofen
d of
liar
are
haft
yet
the
out
re-
ne,
em-
re-
ow-
m,
ap-
e so
uld
wish
on-
d as
nd
be
xt o
be

be greater in the world. For thy will and the love of thy glory ought to be preferred before all things, and to comfort him more, and please him better, then all the benefits which either he hath received or may receive.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of foure things that bring much peace.

CHRIST. Sonne, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true libertie.

CHRISTIAN. Do Lord, I beseech thee, as thou saist, for I shall be very glad to hear it.

CHRIST. Endeavour, my Sonne, to do rather the will of another, then thine own. Ever choose rather to have lesse then more. Alwayes seek the lowest place, and to be inferiour to every one. Wish alwayes and pray, that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee. Behold such a man entereth into the bounds of peace and quietnesse.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection.

on. It is little in words , but full in sense , and abundant in fruit. For if it could faithfully be kept by me , then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel my self unquiet and afflicted , I find that I have strayed from this doctrine. But thou that canst do all things , and ever lovest the profiting of my soul , increase in me thy grace , that I may fulfill thy words , and work out mine own salvation.

3. *A prayer against evil thoughts.*

My Lord God , be not farre from me ; my God , have regard to help me : for sundrie thoughts have risen up against me , and great fears , afflicting my soul. How shall I passe through them without hurt ? How shall I utterly break them ?

CHRIST. I, saith he , *will go before thee , and will humble the great ones of the earth , I will open the doores of the prison , and reveal unto thee hidden secrets.*

CHRISTIAN. Do Lord as thou sayest , and let all my evil thoughts flie from before thy face. This is my hope , my onely comfort , to flie unto thee in
eve-

every tribulation, to trust in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

A prayer for enlightning of the mind.

4. Enlighten me O good Iesus, with a clear-shining inward light, and drive away all darknesse from the habitation of my heart. Represse my many wandering thoughts, & utterly break in pieces those temptations which violently assault me. Fight strongly for me, and vanquish those evil beasts, I mean those enticing desires of the flesh, that so peace may be obtained by thy power, and that abundance of thy praise may sound in the holy Court of a pure conscience. Command the winds and tempests: say unto the sea, Be still: and to the north wind, blow not; and a great calm shall ensue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may shine upon the earth: for I am as the earth without forme and void, untill thou enlighten me. Poure out thy grace from above, let thy heavenly dew distill upon my heart, supply fresh streams

M

of

of grace, to water the face of the earth, that it may bring forth good and excellent fruit. Lift up my mind which is pressed down by the weight of sinnes. Draw up my whole desire to heavenly things; that having tasted the sweetnesse of supernall happinesse, it may be irksome to me even to think of earthly vanities.

6. Pluck me and deliver me from all the unlasting comfort of creatures: for no created thing can fully comfort and quiet my desire. Joyn me unto thee with an unseparable band of love: for thou even alone dost satisfie him that loveth thee, and without thee all things are vain.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.

CHRIST. Sonne, be not curious, trouble not thy self with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me. For what is it to thee, whether that man be such or no, or whether this man do, or speak this or that? Thou shalt

shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt give account of thy self. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy self? Behold I know every one, and do see all things that are under the sunne, and do understand how it is with every one; what he thinks, what he would, and at what his intention aimes. All things therefore are to be committed unto me; but do thou keep thy self in good peace, and let the unquiet be as unquiet as they will. Whatsoever they shall have done, or said, shall fall upon themselves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. Be not carefull for the shadow of a great name, or for the familiarity of many, nor for the private affection of men: for these things both distract and greatly darken the heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my secrets unto thee, if thou didst diligently observe my coming, and didst open the door of thy heart unto me. Be carefull and watch in prayer, and humble thy self in all things.

CHAP. XXV.

Wherein the firm peace of the heart, and true spirituall profiting consisteth?

CHRIST. Sonne, I have said, *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* All do desire peace, but all care not for those things that appertain unto true peace. My peace is with the humble and meek of heart. Thy peace doth consist in much patience. If thou wilt hear me and follow my voice, thou maist enjoy much peace.

CHRISTIAN. What then shall I do, Lord?

CHRIST. In every thing attend unto thy self what thou doest, and what thou sayest: and direct thy whole intention unto this, that thou maist please me alone, and desire or seek nothing besides me. Of the sayings and doings of others judge nothing rashly: neither do thou intangle thy self with things not committed unto thee: and doing thus, thou shalt be little or seldome troubled.

2 But never to feel any trouble at all, nor to suffer any grief of heart or body, is not the state of this life, but of everlasting rest. Think not therefore that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow; nor that then all is well, if thou have no adversary; nor that all is perfect, if all things be done according to thy desire. Neither do thou then esteem highly of thy self, or account thy self to be specially beloved, if thou be in great devotion and sweetnesse: for by these things a true lover of virtue is not known; neither doth the profiting and perfection of a man consist in these things.

3. CHRISTIAN. Wherein then Lord?

CHRIST. In offering thy self with all thy heart unto the will of God, nor seeking thine own interest, neither in great nor little, neither for a time nor for ever, so that thou keepest one and the same countenance with thanksgiving, both in prosperity and in adversity, weighing all things with an equall ballance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope,

M 3

that

that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou preparest thy heart to suffer greater things; and does not justify thy self, as though thou oughtest not to suffer these and so great afflictions; but justifiest me in whatsoever I appoint, and praisest my holy name; then thou walkest in the true and right way of peace: and thou shalt have undoubted hope to see my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy self; then shalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace, as this thy state of sojourning in this world is capable of.

CHAP. XXVI.

*Of the excellency of a free mind,
which humble Prayer sooner
gaineth then Reading.*

CHRISTIAN. Lord, it is the work of a perfect man, never to slack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to pass without care amongst many cares; not like a dull sluggard; but by the privilege of a free mind, adhering to no crea-

creature with inordinate affection.

2. I beseech thee, my most gracious God, preserve me from the cares of this life, lest I should be too much intangled thereby: and from the many necessities of the body, lest I should be caught by pleasure: and from whatsoever is an obstacle to the soul, lest broken with troubles I should be overthrown. I say not from those things that worldly vanity so greatly desireth: but from those miseries, that as punishment and as the common curse of mortality, do weigh down and hinder the soul of thy servant, that it cannot enter into freedome of spirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the ineffable sweetness, embitter unto me all carnall comfort, which may draw me away from the love of eternall things, and may wickedly allure me to it self by the beholding of some present delightful good. Let me not be overcome, O Lord, let me not be overcome by flesh and bloud. Let not the world and the short glory thereof deceive me. Let not the Devil and his

til fraud supplant me. Give me strength to resist, patience to suffer, and constancie to persevere. Give me in stead of all the comforts of the world, the most sweet unction of thy Spirit, and in lieu of carnall love poure into my soul the love of thy name.

4. Behold, meat, drink, clothes, and other necessities for the maintenance of the body, are burdensome unto a fervent spirit. Grant me to use such refreshments moderately, and not to be intangled with an over great desire of them. It is not lawfull to cast away all things, for that nature is to be sustained: but to desire superfluities, and those things that are rather pleasurable, thy holy law forbiddeth: for otherwise the flesh would rebell against the spirit. Herein, I beseech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

C H A P. XXVII.

*That private love most hindereth from the
chiefest Good.*

C H R I S T. Sonne, thou oughtest to give all for all, and to retain nothing

thing of thy self. Know, that the love of thy self doth hurt thee more then any thing in the world. According to the love & affection thou bearest them, so doth every thing cleave unto thee more or lesse. If thy love be pure, simple, and well ordered, thou shalt be free from the bondage of things. Covet not that which thou mayest not have. Be not willing to have that which may hinder thee and deprive thee of inward liberty. It is strange that thou committest not thy self wholly unto me, from the bottome of thy heart, with all things that thou canst desire or have.

2. **Why** dost thou consume thy self with vain grief? **Why** art thou tired with needlesse cares? stand to my good will, and thou shalt suffer no detriment at all. If thou seekest this or that, and wouldest be here or there, to enjoy thine own commoditie and pleasure; thou shalt never be at quiet, nor free from trouble of mind: for in every thing somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be some that will crosse thee.

3. Not every externall thing therefore

fore attained and heaped together helpeth thee, but it rather availeth, if thou despise it, and dost utterly root it out from thy heart: which thou must not understand onely of thy revenues and wealth, but of thy seeking after honour also, and thy desire of vain praise; all which do passe away with this world. The place availeth little, if the spirit offervour be wanting: neither shall that peace which is sought abroad long continue, if the state of thy heart be destitute of a true foundation: that is, unlesse thou stand stedfast in me, thou maiest change, but not better thy self. For when occasion doth happen, thou shalt find not onely those things which thou soughtest to flie, but a great deale more.

A prayer for purging the heart, and obtaining of heavenly wisdom.

4. CHRISTIAN. Strengthen me, O God, by the grace of thy holy Spirit. Give me to be strengthened in my inward man, and to empty my heart of all unprofitable care and anguish; not to be drawn

drawn away with the fundrie desires of any thing either mean or precious, but to look upon all things as passing away, and that my self do also passe away together with them : for nothing is permanent under the sunne, where all things are vanitie and vexation of spirit. O how wise is he that so considereth them !

5. Grant me, Lord, heavenly wisdom, that I may learn above all things to seek and find thee, above all things to relish thee, and to love thee, and to think of all other things as they are, according to the disposall of thy wisdom. Grant me prudently to avoid him that flatters me, & to suffer patiently him that contradicts me. For it is a great part of wisdom not to be moved with every blast of words; nor to give care to an ill flattering *Siren*; for so we shall go on securely in the way which we have begun.

CH A P. XXVIII.

Against the tongues of Slanderers.

CHRIST. Sonne, take it not grievously if some think evil of thee,
and

and speak that which thou wouldst not willingly heare. Thou oughtest to judge the worst of thy self, and to think no man weaker then thy self. If thou doest walk spiritually, thou wilt not much esteeme of flying words. It is no small wisdom to keepe silence in an evil time, and inwardly to turn to me, and not to be troubled with the judgement of men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men. For whether they interpret well or evil, thou art not therefore another man. Where is true peace, and true glorie? Is it not in me? And he that coveteth not to please men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love and vain fear ariseth all disquietnesse of heart and distraction of the mind.

C H A P. XXIX.

How we ought to call upon God, and blesse him when tribulation draweth near.

CHRISTIAN. Blessed (O Lord) be thy name for ever; since it pleaseth thee that this temptation and tribulation

tion should come upon me. I cannot flie it, but have need to flie to thee, that thou maiest help me, and turn it to my good. Lord I am now afflicted, and it is not well with me, I am much troubled with this present suffering. And now, dear Father, what shall I say? I am caught amidst straits, save me from this houre. Yet therefore came I into this houre, that thou maiest be glorified, when I shall be greatly humbled, and by thee delivered. Let it please thee Lord, to deliver me: for, poore wretch that I am, what can I do, and whither shall I go without thee? Grant patience Lord, even this time also. Help me my God, and then I will not fear how grievously soever I be afflicted.

2. And now in these my troubles what shall I say? Lord, thy will be done; I have well deserved to be afflicted and grieved. Surely I ought to bear it: and O that I could bear it with patience, untill the tempest be passed over, and it become calm! But thy omnipotent hand is able to take even this temptation from me, and to assuage the violence thereof, that I utter-

terly sink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou hast done unto me, O my God, my Mercie. And how much the more hard it is to me, so much the more easie is this *change of the right hand of the most High.*

C H A P. XXX.

Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.

CHRIST. Sonne, I am the Lord that giveth strength in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which most of all hindreth heavenly consolation, that thou art slow in turning thy self unto prayer. For before thou dost earnestly pray unto me, thou seekest in the mean while many comforts, and delightest thy self in outward things. And hence it comes to passe that all doth little profit thee, untill thou consider that I am he that deliver those that trust in me: and that out of me there is neither powerfull help, nor profitable counsell, nor lasting remedie. But now thou having recovered

red breath after the tempest, gather strength again in the light of my mercies: for I am at hand, saith the Lord, to repair all, not onely entirely, but also abundantly and in a very plentiful measure.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiseth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firm and constant. Take courage and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time. Wait, wait for me, I will come and heal thee. It is a temptation that vexeth thee, and a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What else doth the care for future contingencies bring thee, but sorrow upon sorrow? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.* It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never come to passe.

3. But it is incident to man, to be deluded with such imaginations: and a signe of a weak mind to be so easily drawn away by the suggestion of the enemy. For he careth not so he delude and deceive thee, whether it be true or false which he
pro-

proposeth: whether he overthrow thee with the love of present, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither let it fear. Believe in me, and put thy trust in my mercy. When thou thinkest thy self furthest off from me, oftentimes I am nearest unto thee. When thou judgest that almost all is lost, then oftentimes the greatest advantage of gaining is at hand. All is not lost when any thing falleth out contrary. Thou must not judge according to that which thou feelest for the present: nor so take, or give thy self over to, any grief from whence soever it cometh, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy self wholly left, although for a time I have sent thee some tribulation, or withdrawn thy desired comfort: for this is the way to the kingdom of heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee and the rest of my servants, that ye be exercised with adversities, then that ye should have all things according to your desires. I know the secret thoughts of thy heart, and that
it

it is very expedient for thy wellfare, that thou be left sometimes without taste [of spirituall sweetnesse, and in a dry condition] lest perhaps thou shouldest be puffed up with thy prosperous estate, and shouldest please thy self in that which thou art not. That which I have given, I can take away; and restore it again when I please.

5. When I give it, it is mine: when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine; for mine is every good and every perfect gift. If I send thee affliction, or any Crosse whatsoever, repine not, nor let thy heart fail thee: I can quickly succour thee; and turn all thy heavinesse into joy. Nevertheless I am righteous, and greatly to be praised, when I deal thus with thee.

6. If thou be wise, and considerest this rightly, thou wilt never mourn so dejectedly for any adversity that befalleth thee, but rather rejoyce and give thanks; yea, account this thy onely joy, that afflicting thee with sorrows, I do not spare thee. *As my Father hath loved me, I also love you,* said I unto my beloved Disciples; whom certainly I sent not out to temporall joyes,

N

but

but to great conflicts: not to honours, but to contempts: not to idlenesse, but to labours: not to rest, but to bring forth much fruit with patience. My Sonne, remember these words.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out the Creatour.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I stand in need of yet greater grace, that I may reach to that pitch, as that nor man nor any creature may be a let unto me. For as long as any thing detains me, I cānot freely take my flight unto thee. He desired to flie freely that said, *Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will flie and be at rest?* What thing more quiet then the single eye? And what more free, then he that desireth nothing upon earth? Man ought therefore to passe over all creatures, and perfectly to forsake himself, and to remain in excessse of mind, and to see that thou the Creatour of all things, hast nothing amongst creatures like unto thee. And unlesse a man be freed from [the affection
of

of] all creatures, he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things. And for this cause there are so few contemplative men to be found, for that few can wholly withdraw themselves from things created and perishing.

2. But to do this there is need of much grace which may raise up the soul, and enravish it above itself. And unlesse a man be raised up in spirit, and freed from all creatures, and wholly united unto God; whatsoever he knoweth, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account. A long while shall he be little, and lie grovelling below, that esteemeth any thing great, but the one only infinite and eternall Good. For whatsoever is not God, is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference between the wisdom of an illuminated and religious man, and the knowledge of a learned and studious Clerk. Farre more noble is that learning which floweth from above from the divine influence, then that which is painfully gotten by the wit of man.

3. There are many that desire con-

templation, but they endeavour not to practise those things that are required thereunto. Another great let is this, that we rest in signes and sensible things, and take little care about the perfect mortification of our selves. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that seem to be called spiritual, that we take so much pains and so great care for transitory and low things; and scarce or seldome think of our own inward concernments, with the full recollection of our minds.

4. Alas, presently after a slight recollection, we break out again, and weigh not our words with diligent examination. We mind not where our affections lie; nor bewail the impurity that is in all our actions. For all flesh had corrupted his way, and therefore did that generall flood ensue. Sith our inward affection then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our actions proceeding thence be corrupted, as a sign of the want of inward vigour. From a pure heart proceedeth the fruit of a good life.

5. We

5. We ask how much one hath done; but how virtuously or vigorously it was done, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be strong, rich, beautiful, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer: but how poor he is in spirit, how patient and meek, how religious and spirituall, is seldome spoken of. Nature respecteth the outward things of man, Grace turneth it self to the inward. That is often deceived: This hath her trust in God, to the end she be not deceived.

CHAP. XXXII.

*Of deniall of our selves, and forsaking
all inordinate desires.*

CHRIST. Sonne, thou canst not possesse perfect liberty, unlesse thou wholly deny thy self. All such are fettred [and in bondage] as seek their proper interest wholly, and are lovers of themselves, covetous, curious, wanderers, alwaies seeking pleasure, and not the things of Iesus Christ; but oftentimes devising and framing that which will not conti-

nue; for all that is not of God shall perish. Keep this short and compleat saying: *For-
sake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave thy in-
ordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest.* Consider this well: and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt understand all.

2. CHRISTIAN. Lord, this is not one daies work, nor childrens sport: yea, in this short word all the perfection of religious persons is included.

CHRIST. Sonne, thou must not go back, nor straitwaies be dejected, when thou hearest of the way of the perfect; but rather be stirred up to higher things, or at least in desire sigh after them. I would it were so well with thee, and thou wert come up to this pitch, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy self, but didst stand merely at my beck, and at his whom I have appointed a Father over thee: then thou shouldst exceedingly please me, and all thy life would passe away in joy and peace. Thou hast yet many things to forsake, which unlesse thou wholly resigne up unto me, thou shalt not attain to that which thou desirest. *I counsell thee to buy*
of

of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest become rich, that is, heavenly wisdom, which treadeth under foot all base and earthly things. Set little by earthly wisdom, and care not fondly to please others or thy self.

3. I said, that the mean things must be bought with precious things and such as were with men of great esteem. For the true heavenly wisdom seemeth mean and of small account, & is scarce thought of by men: for that esteemeth not highly of it self, nor seeketh to be magnified upon earth; many praise it from the teeth outward, but in their life they are farre from it; yet is it the precious Pearl which is hidden from many.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of inconstancy of heart, and of directing our finall intentions unto God.

CHRIST. Sonne, trust not to thy present affection; for it will quickly be changed into another thing. As long as thou livest, thou art subject to mutability, even against thy will: so that now

thou art merry, now sad; now quiet, now troubled; now devout, now undevout; now diligent, now slow; now grave, now light. But he that is wise and well instructed in the spirit, standeth fast upon these mutable things; not heeding what he feelth in himself, or which way the wind of instability bloweth; but that the whole intention of his mind may tend to the right and best end. For thus he may continue one, and the self same, and unshaken in the midst of so many various events, directing continually the single eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, with so much the more constancy doth he passeth through the severall kinds of storms. But in many things the eye of a pure intention waxeth dim-sighted, for it quickly looketh upon some delightful object that it meeteth withall: And it is rare to find one that is wholly free from all blemish of self-seeking. So the Jews in times past came into Bethany to Martha and Mary, not for Iesus alone, but to see Lazarus also. The eye of our
in-

intention therefore is to be purged, that it may be single and right, and to be directed unto me, beyond the manifold diversity of all mediums, and whatsoever earthly objects come between.

C H A P. XXXIV.

That God is sweet, above all things, and in all things, to him that loveth h.

C H R I S T I A N. Behold, *My God, and all things*. What would I have more, and what more happy thing can I desire? O sweet and savoury word! but to him that loveth the Word, not the world nor those things that are in the world. *My God, and all things*. Enough is said to him, that understandeth; and to him that loveth it is pleasant to repeat it often. For when Thou art present, all things do yield delight; but when thou art absent, every thing becomes irksome. Thou givest quiet of heart, and much peace, and pleasant joy. Thou makest us think well of all things, and praise thee in all things: neither can any thing please long without thee: but if it be pleasant and gratefull, thy grace must be present, and it must be
sea-

seasoned with the sweetnesse of thy wisdom.

2. What is not savoury unto him to whom thou art pleasing? And whom thou delightest not, what can be pleasant to him? But the wise of this world, and they that relish the things of the flesh, come short of thy wisdom: for in the world is much vanity, and in the flesh is death. But they that follow thee by the contempt of wordly things, and mortification of the flesh, are proued to be truly wise: For they are changed from vanity to truth, from the flesh to the spirit. These relish God; and what good soever is found in creatures, they wholly referre unto the praise of their Maker. Notwithstanding great, yea very great is the difference between the sweetnesse of the creature and of the creature, of eternity and of time, of light uncreated and of light enlightened.

3. O thou everlasting light, surpassing all created lights, dart the beams of thy brightnesse from above, which may pierce all the most inward parts of my heart

heart: purifie, rejoyce, enlighten and enliven my spirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with abundance of joy and triumph. O when will that blessed and desired houre come, that I may be filled with thy presence, and thou maiest be unto me all in all! As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full joy. Alas! the old man yet liveth in me, he is not wholly crucified, he is not perfectly dead. He doth as yet lust strongly against the spirit, and stirreth up inward warres, and suffereth not the Kingdome of my soul to be in peace.

4. But thou that rulest the power of the sea, and stillest the rising of the waves thereof, arise and help me: scatter the people that desire warre, destroy them in thy might, display thy greatnesse, and let thy right hand be glorified; for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee my Lord God.

CHAP. XXXV.

*That there is no security from temptation
in this life.*

CHRIST. Sonne, there is no security in this life: as long as thou livest, thou shalt alwaies have need of spirituall armour. Thou livest among enemies, and art assaulted on the right hand and on the left. If therefore thou defendest not thy self on every side with the shield of patience, thou canst not be long unwounded. Moreover, if thou fix not thy heart on me with a sincere will to suffer all things for me, thou canst not bear the heat of this battel, nor obtain the triumphant reward of the Saints in blisse. Thou oughtest therefore manfully to go through all, and to use a strong hand against whatsoever withstandeth thee. For to him that overcometh is manna given; but for the negligent there remains much misery.

2. If thou seekest rest in this world, how wilt thou then attain to everlasting rest? Dispose not thy self to much ease,

but

out to much patience. Seek true peace, not in earth, but in heaven; not in men nor in any other creature, but in God alone. Thou oughtest for the love of God willingly to undergo all things, even labours, griefs, temptations, vexations, anxieties, necessities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reprehensions, humblings, shame, corrections, and contempts: these help to virtue: these try a Novice of Christ: these make the heavenly crown. I will give an everlasting reward for a short labour, and infinite glory for transitory shame.

3. Thinkest thou that thou shalt alwayes have spirituall consolations at will? My Saints had not so, but they had many afflictions, & sundry temptations, & many discomforts: in all which they did bear up themselves patiently, and trusted rather in God then in themselves, knowing that the sufferings of this time are not condigne to the deserving of future glory. Wilt thou have that straightwayes, which many after many tears and great labours have hardly obtained? Wait upō the Lord,
do

do manfully, be of good courage: do not despair, do not fly, but with constancy expose both body and soul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in most plentiful manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

C H A P. XXXVI.

Against the vain judgements of men.

CH R I S T. Sonne, cast thy heart constantly upon God, and fear not the judgements of men, when thy conscience giveth testimony of thy piety and innocency. It is a good and happy thing to suffer in such a way: neither will it be burdensome to an humble heart, nor to him that trusteth rather in God than in himself. The most part of men are given to talk much, and therefore little heed is to be given them: neither is it possible to satisfie all. Although *Paul* endeavoured to please all in the Lord, and made himself all things unto all, yet with him it was a very small thing that he should be judged of mans judgement.

2. He did for the edification and salvation.

tion of others as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder but that he was sometimes judged and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all; and he defended himself with patience and humility against evil tongues, and such as thought vanities and lies, and spake what they lifted: Yet sometimes notwithstanding he answered, lest the weak should be offended by his silence.

3. Who art thou that fearest a mortall man? To day he is, and to morrow he is not seen. Fear God, and thou shalt not need to fear the terroures of men. What harm can the words or injuries of any do thee? He rather hurteth himself then thee; neither can he avoid the judgement of God, whosoever he be. Have thou God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the present thou seemest to be worsted, and to suffer shame without desert; do not therefore repine, neither do thou lessen thy crown by thy impatience; but rather lift up thy eyes to me in heaven who am able
to

to deliver thee from all shame & wrong
and to render to every one according to
their works.

CHAP. XXXVII.

*Of a full and pure resignation of our selves
for the obtaining freedome of heart.*

CH R I S T. Sonne, forsake thy self
and thou shalt find me. Make no
self-respecting choice of any thing, appro-
priate nothing to thy self, and thou shalt
ever be a gainer. For greater grace shall be
given thee, when thou dost perfectly re-
signe thy self, and not turn back to take
thy self again.

CH R I S T I A N. Lord, how often
shall I resigne my self? and wherein shall
I forsake my self?

CH R I S T. Alwaies, and every hour
as well in little things as in great. I do ex-
cept nothing, but do require that thou be
naked [and void] of all things. Other-
wise how canst thou be mine, and I thinke
unlesse both within and without thou be
free from all self-will? And how much
the sooner thou dost this, so much the
better

better it will be with thee ; and how much the more fully and sincerely thou doest it, so much the more shalt thou please me , and so much the more shalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that resigne themselves , but with some exception; for they put not their whole trust in God, and therefore they study how to provide for themselves. Some also at the first do offer all, but afterwards being assailed with temptations , do return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forward in the way of virtue. These shall not attain to the true liberty of the pure heart, nor to the favour of my sweetest familiarity ; unless they first make an entire resignation and a daily oblation of themselves unto me. For without this there neither is nor can be the fruitive union with me.

3 I have often said unto thee, & now again I say the same, Forsake thy self, resign thy self, & thou shalt enjoy much inward peace. Give all for all ; seek nothing, require back nothing, abide purely & with a

O

firme

firme confidence in me, and thou shalt enjoy me; thou shalt be free in heart, and darknesse shall not have power over thee. Let this be thy whole endeavour, let this be thy prayer, let this be thy desire; that being stript of all selfnesse, thou mayst even nakedly follow naked Iesus, and dying to thy self, mayst live eternally to me. Then shall all vain imaginations, evil perturbations, and superfluous cares fly away: then shall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love shall die.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

*Of good government in outward things, and
of recourse to God in dangers.*

C H R I S T. Sonne, thou oughtest with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action or externall businesse, thou be inwardly free and master of thy self, and that all things be under thee, and thou not under them; that thou mayst be lord and master of thy actions, not a servant or a hireling, but rather a freeman and a true Hebrew, passing

sing into the lot and freedome of the sons of God, who standing upon the things that are present, view the things which are eternall; who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right do behold the things of heaven; whom temporall things cannot draw to cleave unto them, but they rather draw temporall things to serve them, and to be disposed by them in such a way as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creatour of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain stedfast in all events, and dost not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnall eye, the things which thou seest and hearest; but presently in every affair dost enter with Moses into the Tabernacle to ask counsell of the Lord; thou shalt sometimes hear the divine Oracle, and shalt return instructed concerning many things both present and to come. For Moses had alwayes recourse to the Tabernacle for the deciding of doubts and controversies, and fled to the help of prayer, for a defence against the i-

niquity and dangers of men. So oughtest thou in like manner to fly to the closet of thy heart, earnestly craving the Divine favour. For the Scripture testifieth, that therefore was Ioshuah and the children of Israel deceived by the Gibeonites, because they asked not counsell at the mouth of the Lord, but giving too lightly credit to their fair words, were deluded with their counterfeit piety.

CHAP. XXXIX.

That a man be not over-earnest in his affairs.

CHRIST. Sonne, alwaies commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it in due time: wait for my ordering of it, and thou shalt find it will be for thy good.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I do most willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can avail little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered my self with all readinesse of mind to thy good pleasure!

2. Christ. Son, oftentimes a man doth car-

earnestly labour for that which he desireth, and when he hath gotten it, he becometh to be of another mind; for mans affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do passe from one to another. It is therefore no small thing for a man to forsake himself even in the smallest things.

3. The true spirituall profiting of a man consisteth in the denying of himself: and he that is thus resigned, liveth in great freedom and security. But the old enemy, who alwayes sets himself against all that are good, ceaseth at no time from tempting, but day and night lieth grievously in wait, to cast the unwary, if he can, into the snare of deceit. Therefore *Watch and pray, saith our Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.*

CHAP. XL.

That man hath no good of himself, nor any thing whereof he can glory.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what is man that thou art mindfull of him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him? What

hath man deserved, that thou shouldest favour him? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if thou forsake me? Or if thou doest not that which I desire, what can I justly say against it? Surely, this I may truly think and say, Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing. I have nothing that is good of my self; but in all things I am defective, and do ever tend to nothing: and unlesse thou help me, and doest inwardly instruct me, I become altogether cold, and am dissolved.

2. But thou, O Lord, art alwaies the same, and endurest for ever; alwaies good, just, and holy, doing all things well, justly, and holily, and disposing all things with wisdom. But I that am more ready to go backward then forward, do not ever continue in one estate, for seven times are passed over me; yet doth it soon turn to the better, when it so pleaseth thee, and when thou vouchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canst help me without the aide of man, and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be no more changed, but my heart shall

shall be turned to thee alone, and there shall rest.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forsake all humane comfort, either for the attaining of devotion, or for mine own necessitie, which inforceth me to seek after thee, (for none else can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy grace, and rejoyce for the gift of new consolation.

4. Thanks be unto thee, from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me: but I am mere vanitie and nothing in thy sight, an unconstant and weak man. Whereof then can I glory? Or for what do I desire to be esteemed of? is it not even for nothing? But this is most vain. Truly vain-glory is an evil plague and a very great vanitie; because it draweth man from true glory, and robbeth him of heavenly grace. For whilst a man pleaseth himself, he displeaseth thee; whilst he gapeth after the praise of men, he is deprived of true virtues.

5. But the true glory and holy rejoycing is for a man to glory in thee, and not

in himself; to rejoyce in thy name, and not in his own virtue [or strength,] nor to delight in any creature, but for thee. Praised be thy name, not mine: magnified be thy work, not mine. Let thy holy name be blessed, but to me let no part of mens praises be given. Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day; but as for my self I will not glory, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the jews seek honour one of another; I will desire this which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporall honour, all worldly highnesse, compared to thy eternall glory, is vanity and folly. O my truth, my mercy, my God, most Blessed Trinitie, to thee alone be praise, honour, power and glory for evermore.

C H A P. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporall honours.

CH R I S T. Sonne, trouble not thy self, if thou seest others honoured and advanced, and thy self contemned
and

and debased. Lift up thy heart unto me in heaven, and the contempt of men on earth will not grieve thee.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, we are blind, and quickly seduced with vanitie. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all creatures do justly take arms against me: for shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honour, and glory. And unlesse I frame my self with a very good will to be despised and forsaken of all creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all; I cannot obtain inward peace & strength, nor be spiritually enlightned, nor fully united unto thee.

CH A P. XLII.

That our peace is not to be placed in men.

CHRIST. Sonne, if the peace thou hast with any be grounded upon the opinion which thou hast of him, or
up-

upon the account of thine acquaintance with him, thou shalt ever be in an unconstant and enthralled condition: but if thou have recourse unto the everliving and eternall Truth, a friend going from thee or dying shall not grieve thee. The love of thy friend ought to be grounded in me; and for me is he to be beloved, whosoever he be whom thou thinkest well of, and is very dear unto thee in this life. No friendship can avail, or continue without me; neither is that love true and pure, which is not knit by me. Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (forasmuch as appertaineth unto thee) thou shouldest wish to be without all company of men. Man approacheth so much the nearer unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all earthly comfort: so much the higher also he ascendeth unto God, by how much lower he descendeth into himself, and how much the meaner he is in his own sight.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himself, hindreth the coming of Gods

Gods grace into him; for the grace of
the holy Ghost ever seeketh an humble
heart. If thou couldst perfectly annihilate
thy self, and empty thy self of all created
love; then should I flow into thee with
great abundance of grace. When thou
castest thy eyes on creatures, the sight of
thy Creatour is taken from thee. Learn
to overcome thy self in all things, for the
love of thy Creatour; and then shalt thou
be able to attain to divine knowledge.
How little soever the thing be, if it be in-
ordinately loved and regarded; it defi-
neth the soul, and hindreth the enjoying
of the chiefest good.

C H A P. XLIII.

Against vain and secular knowledge.

CHRIST. Sonne, let not the fair
speeches and subtile sayings of men
move thee. For *the Kingdome of God con-*
sisteth not in word, but in power. Observe
well my words; for they enflame hearts,
and enlighten minds, they cause compun-
ction, and bring sundry comforts. Do
thou never read to shew thy self learned
or

or wise; but labour to mortifie thy sins for that will profit thee more then the knowledge of many difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and known many things; thou oughtest ever to return to one beginning and Principle. I am he, that teacheth man knowledge and give unto babes a more clear understanding, then can be taught by man. He therefore, to whom I speak, shall quickly be wise, and shall profit much in the spirit. Wo be to them that enquire many curious things of men, and do little mind the way how to serve me. The time will come, when the Master of masters shall appear, Christ the Lord of Angels, to hear the lessons of all, that is, to examine the consciences of every one: and then he will search Jerusalem with a candle, and the hidden things of darknesse shall be laid open, and the arguings of mens tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant do raise up the humble mind to understand more of the eternall truth, then can be gotten by ten years studie in the schools: I teach
with-

without the noise of words, without the
confounding of opinions, without ambi-
tion of honour, without the scuffling of ar-
guments. I am he that teacheth to despise
earthly things, to lothe things present, to
seek the everlasting, to relish the things
that are eternall, to fly honours, to suffer
injuries, to place all hope in me, to desire
nothing out of me, and above all things
ardently to love me.

4. For a certain person by loving me
entirely, learned divine things, and spake
that which was admirable: he profited
more by forsaking all things, then in stu-
ying subtilties. To some I speak com-
mon things, to others more speciall
things; to some I appear sweetly by signs
and figures, but to some I reveal mysteries
with much light. The voice of books is
indeed one, but it teacheth not all men a-
like. For I am the inward Teacher, I am
the Truth, I am the searcher of the heart,
the discerner of the thoughts, the setter
forwards of what is good, distributing to
every one as I judge meet.

CHAP. XLIV.

*Of not drawing outward things to
our selves.*

CRIST. Sonne, in many things thou oughtest to be ignorant, and esteeme thyself as dead upon earth, and as one to whom the whole world is crucified. Thou must also passe by many things with a deaf care, and rather think of that which appertaineth to thy peace. It is better for thee to turn thine eyes from what doth mislike thee, and to leave unto every one his own opinion, then to strive with contentious words. If all stand well betwixt thee and God, and if thou hast his judgement in thy mind, thou shalt the more easily bear if thou be overcome.

2. CHRISTIAN. O Lord, what a passe are we come! Behold, we bewail a temporall losse, for a little gain we toil and runne; and the spirituall damage of our soul is forgotten, and hardly to length called to mind. That which little or nothing profiteth, is minded; and that which is chiefly necessary, is slightly passed.

ed over, because the whole man doth
slide down into externall things; and un-
lesse he speedily repent, he lieth immerst
in them, and that willingly.

C H A P. XLV.

*That credit is not to be given to all men: and
how prone man is to of-
fend in words.*

CHRISTIAN. Help me, O Lord,
in my tribulation, for vain is the
help of man. How often have I been de-
ceived, finding want of faith, where I
thought it sure? And how often have I
found faith where I least expected it? It is
vain therefore to trust in men; but the
salvation of the just, O Lord, is in thee.
Blessed be thou my Lord God, in all
things that befall us. We are weak and
inconstant, quickly deceived, and soon
changed.

2. Who is he, that in all things so warily
& circumspectly keepes himself, that he
never falls into any deceit or perplexity?
But he that trusteth in thee, O Lord, and
seeketh thee with a single heart, doth not

so

so easily fall; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never so much enthralled, yet he shall quickly be either delivered or comforted by thee. For thou wilt not forsake him for ever that trusteth in thee. A friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithfull in all his friends distresses; but thou, O Lord, thou alone art most faithfull at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

3. O how wise was that holy soul that said, My mind is firmly settled and grounded in Christ! If it were so with me, there would not humane fear so easily trouble me, nor the darts of words move me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware beforehand of future evils? If things even foreseen do oftentimes hurt us, how can things unlooked for choose but wound us grievously? But why did I not provide better for my self, miserable wretch? Why also have I so easily given credit to others? But we are men, nothing but frail men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shall I give credit, Lord? to whom but to thee

thee? Thou art the Truth that neither dost deceive, nor canst be deceived. And on the other side, Every man is a liar, weak, unconstant, and subject to fall, especially in words: and therefore we must not easily give credit even to that, which in outward shew seemeth at the first to be right.

4. O with what wisdom hast thou warned us to beware of men! And because a mans foes are they of his own household, not to give credit, if one should say, *Lo here*, or *Lo there*. I am taught to my cost, and O that I might thereby encrease my care, and not my folly. Be wary saith one, be wary; keep to thy self what I tell thee: and whilst I hold my peace, and think it is secret, he cannot keep that secret which he desired should be secret, but presently discloseth me and himself, and goeth his way. From such tales and such indiscreet persons protect me, O Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit such things. Give me to observe truth and constancy in my words, and remove farre from me a deceitfull
P tongue.

tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good is it and tending to peace, to be silent of others, nor to believe promiscuously all that is said, nor easily to report what we have heard; to lay ones self open to few; alwayes to seek after thee who art the beholder of the heart; not be carried about with every wind of words, but to desire that all things both within and without, be accomplished according to the pleasure of thy will. How safe is it for the keeping of heavenly grace, to fly the sight of men, and not to seek those things that seem to cause admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of life and zeal of godlinesse.

6. To how many hath virtue known and over-hastily commended, been hurtfull? How profitable hath grace been kept with silence in this mortall life, which is nothing but a temptation and a warfare?

C H A P. XLVI

Of putting our trust in God when evil words arise.

CH R I S T. Sonne, be constant, and put thy trust in me. For what are words but words? They fly through the air, but hurt not so much as a stone. If thou be guilty, see that thou be not unwilling to amend thy self: if thou be innocent, resolve to suffer this willingly for the sake of God. It is but a small matter to suffer sometimes a few words, if thou hast not yet the courage to endure hard stripes. And why do small matters go to thy heart, but for that thou art yet carnall, & regardest men more then thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, but seekest the shades of excuses.

2. But look better into thy self, and thou shalt see that the world is yet alive in thee, and a vain affection to please men. For when thou shunnest to be humbled and reprov'd for thy faults, it is evident

that thou art neither truly humble, nor truly dead to the world, nor the world crucified to thee. But give diligent ear to my words, and thou shalt little regard ten thousand words spoken by men. Behold, if all should be spoken against thee that could be most maliciously invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou sufferedst it to passe, and madest no more reckoning of it then of a mote? could all those words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath no heart in him, nor hath God before his eyes, is easily moved with a word of dispraise; when as he that trusteth in me, and affects not to confide in his own judgement, shall be free from humane fears. For I am the Judge and the discernor of all secrets: I know how the matter passed, I know him that offereth the injury, and him that suffereth it. From me hath this proceeded: this hath happened by my permission, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. I shall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a secret judgement

would before-hand try them both.

4. The testimony of men oftentimes deceiveth: but my judgement is true; it shall stand, and not be overthrown. It is commonly hidden, and not known in every thing, but to few: notwithstanding it never erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the foolish it seems not right. Men ought therefore to have recourse to me in every judgement, and not to leane to their own opinions. For the just man will not be troubled, whatsoever befalleth him from God: and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth against him, he will not much care; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reason excused. For he considereth that I am he that searcheth the heart and reins, and do judge not according to the outward face, nor humane apparence. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my sight, that in the judgement of men is thought to be commendable.

5. CHRISTIAN. O Lord God, the just Iudge, strong and patient, thou who knowest the frailty and pravity of

man; be thou my strength, and all my trust, for mine own conscience sufficeth me not. Thou knowest that which I know not, and therefore in every reproofe I ought to have humbled my self, and to have borne it meekly: vouchsafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herein, and give me again grace of greater sufferance. For thy abundant mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of pardon, then my conceived justice for the defence of my hidden conscience. Although I know nothing by my self, yet I cannot hereby justifie my self; for without thy mercy no man living shall be justified in thy sight.

CHAP. XLVII.

*That all grievous things are to be endured
for life everlasting.*

CHRIST. Sonne, be not dismaied with the painfull labours which thou hast undertaken for me, neither be thou wholly discomforted for the tribulations which do befall thee; but let my promise strengthen and comfort thee in all events.

I am able to reward thee infinitely and above all measure. Thou shalt not long toil here, nor alwaies be pressed with griefs. Wait a while, and thou shalt see a speedy end of thy evils. There will come an hour when all labour and trouble shall cease. Little and short is all that which passeth away with time.

2. Do what thou dost; labour faithfully in my vineyard; I will be thy reward. Write, read, sing, mourn, keep silence, pray, suffer crosses manfully: life everlasting is worthy of all these yea and greater combats. Peace shall come in the day which is known unto the Lord, and there shall be neither day nor night, to wit, of this time, but everlasting light, infinite brightnesse, stedfast peace, and secure rest. Then thou shalt not say, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* nor crie, *Who is me, that my sojourning is prolonged!* For death shall be thrown down, and salvation shall appear which never shall have end; there shall be no anxiety: but blessed joy, sweet and lovely company.

3. O, if thou hadst seen the everlasting

crowns of the Saints in heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce who in times past were contemptible to this world, and esteemed unworthy of life it self; truly thou wouldest presently humble thy self even unto the earth; & wouldest rather seek to be under the feet of all, then to have command so much as over one: neither wouldest thou desire the pleasant dayes of this life, but rather rejoyce to suffer affliction for God, and esteem it thy greatest gain to be reputed as nothing amongst men.

4. O if thou hadst a relishing of these things, and didst suffer them to sink into the bottome of thy heart, how durst thou so much as once to complain? Are not all painfull labours to be endured for everlasting life? It is no small matter, to lose or to gain the Kingdome of heaven. Lift up thy face therefore unto heaven: behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are secure, now are at rest, and shall remain with me everlastingly in the Kingdome of my Father.

CHAP. XLVIII.

*Of the everlasting day, and short-
nesse of this life.*

CHRISTIAN. O most blessed mansion of the heavenly City! O most clear day of Eternity, which night obscureth not, but the highest Truth ever enlightneth; A day of continuall joy, of perpetuall quietnesse, and never changing into a contrary state! O that that day would once appear, and all these temporall things were at an end! To the Saints it shineth glistering with everlasting brightnesse, but to those that are Pilgrimes upon earth, it appeareth only afarre off, and as it were through a glasse.

2. The Citizens of heaven do know how joyfull that day is: but the banished children of Eve bewail the bitternesse and tediousnesse of this. The dayes of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow and anguish; where man is defiled with many sinnes, incumbred with many passions, disquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, distracted with many curiosities,

ties, intangled with many vanities, compassed about with many errors, worn away with many labours, vexed with temptations, weakned with pleasures, tormented with want.

3. O, when shall these evils be at an end! When shall I be delivered from the miserable bondage of sin! When shall I think, O Lord, of thee alone! When shall I fully rejoyce in thee! When shall I enjoy true liberty without all impediments whatsoever, without all trouble of mind and body! When shall I have solid peace, secure and undisturbed peace, peace within and without, peace every way assured! O good Iesus, when shall I stand to behold thee! When shall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdome! When wilt thou be unto me All in all! O when shall I be with thee in thy Kingdome, which thou hast prepared for thy beloved, from all eternity! I am left a poor and banished man in the land of mine enemies, where there are daily warres and great calamities.

4. Comfort my banishment, assuage my

my sorrow; for my whole desire sigheth
after thee. For all is burdensome to me,
whatsoever this world offereth for my
comfort. I long to enjoy thee most in-
wardly, but I cannot attain unto it. My
desire is, that I may be wholly given up to
heavenly things, but temporall things and
unmortified passions weigh me down.
With the mind I would be above all
things, but with the flesh I am inforced to
be subject against my will. Thus unhap-
py man that I am, I fight against my self,
and am become grievous to my self,
whilst my spirit seeketh to be above, and
my flesh to be below.

5. O what do I inwardly suffer, when
in my mind I consider heavenly things,
and presently in my prayers a multitude
of carnall imaginations present them-
selves before me! My God, be not farre
from me, depart not in thy wrath from
thy servant. Cast forth thy lightning, and
disperse them: send out thy darts, and
break all the imaginations which my ene-
my casts in. Gather in, call home my sen-
ses unto thee, make me forget all the
things

things of this world : grant me to cast away speedily the imaginations of wickednesse. Succour me, O thou the everlasting Truth, that no vanity may move me. Come heavenly sweetnesse and let all impuritie flie from before thee. Pardon me also, and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing else besides thee in prayer. I do truly confesse, that I am wont to be subject to many distractions: for oftentimes I am not there, where I do corporally stand, or sit; but I am rather there, whither my thoughts do carry me. Where my thought is there am I : there is oftentimes my thought, where my affection is. That quickly offereth it self unto me, which is naturally delightfome, or by custome is pleasing.

6. And for this cause, thou that art Truth it self hast plainly said, *Where thy treasure is, there is also thy heart*. If I love heaven, I willingly think of heavenly things. If I love the world, I rejoyce at the felicity of the world, and grieve for the adversity thereof. If I love the flesh, I shall fancy oftentimes those things that
are

are pleasing to the flesh: if I love the spirit, I delight to think of spirituall things. For whatsoever I love, thereof do I willingly speak, and heare, and carry home with me the forms [the Ideas and representations] thereof. But blessed is that man, that for thee, O Lord, dismisseth all creatures; that violently resisteth nature, & through fervour of spirit crucifieth the lusts of the flesh; that so with a serene conscience he may offer pure prayers unto thee, and be meet to be admitted into the Angelicall quire, all earthly things both outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

CHAP. XLIX.

Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those that fight valiantly.

CHRIST. Sonne, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting blisse to be given thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the Tabernacle of this body, that thou maiest behold my brightnesse without shadow of turning;
open

open thy heart wide, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole desire. Give greatest thanks to the heavenly goodness, that dealeth with thee so favourably, visiteth thee mercifully, stirreth thee up fervently, holdeth thee up powerfully, lest through thine own weight thou fall down to the things of earth. Neither dost thou obtain this by thine own thought or endeavour, but by the meritedignation of heavenly grace and divine favour; to the end that thou maist make a further progresse in holinesse, and obtain greater humility, and prepare thyself for future battels, & endeavour to cleave unto me with the whole affection of thy heart, and serve me with a fervent desire.

2. Sonne, the fire burneth many times, but the flame ascendeth not up without smoke: so likewise the desires of some men burn towards heavenly things, and yet they are not free from temptation of carnall affection: and therefore it is not altogether purely for the honour of God that which they so earnestly request of him. Such is also oftentimes thy desire, which

which thou hast pretended to be so serious. For that is not pure and perfect, which is tinctured with the love of thine own proper commodity and interest.

3. Ask not that which is delightfull and profitable to thee, but that which is acceptable to me, and appertaineth to my honour: for if thou judgest aright, thou oughtest to preferre and follow my appointment, rather then thine own desire, for any desired thing. I know thy desire, and have heard thy frequent groanes. Now thou wouldest enjoy the glorious liberty of the Sonnes of God: now doth thee everlasting habitation, and the heavenly Country replenished with all joy, delight thee; but that hour is not yet come: as yet there is another time, to wit, a time of warre, a time of labour and triall. Thou desirest to be filled with the chiefeest good, but thou canst not attain it for the present. I am he, saith the Lord, whom thou must patiently wait for, untill the Kingdome of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed upon earth, and to be exercised in many things.

Com-

Comfort shall be sometimes given thee but the abundant fulnesse thereof shall not be granted. Take courage therefore and be valiant as well in doing as in suffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughtest to put on the new man, and to be changed into another man. Thou must oftentimes do that which thou wouldest not, and leave undone that thou wouldest do. That which is pleasing to others, shall go well forward: that which thou wishest, shall not speed. That which others say, shall be heard: what thou saist shall be nothing regarded. Others shall ask and shall receive: Thou shalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others shall be great in the praise of men, but of thee there shall be no speech. To others this or that shall be committed, but thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this nature will sometimes be troubled, and it is much if thou bearest it with silence. In these and many such like, a faithfull servant of the Lord is wont to be tried, how he can deny and break himself in all things. There is scarce any thing, where-

wherein thou hast had such need to dye to thy self, as in seeing and suffering those things that are contrary to thy will; especially when that is commanded, which seemeth unto thee inconvenient, or lesse profitable. And for that thou being placed under authoritie, darest not resist the higher power, therefore it seemeth hard unto thee to walk at the beck of another, and to leave all thine own opinion.

6. But consider, Sonne, the fruit of these labours, the end near at hand, and the reward exceeding great; and thou shalt be so farre from sustaining them grievously, that thou wilt take great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy will, which now thou willingly forsakest, thou shalt alwayes have thy will in heaven. There thou shalt finde all that thou wilt or canst desire; there thou shalt enjoy all good without fear of losing it; there shall thy will be ever one with me; it shall not covet any outward or private thing. There no man shall withstand thee, no man complain of thee, no man hinder thee, nothing

Q

come

come against thee : but all things desired shall be there together present, & refresh thy whole affection, and fill it up to the brim. There I will give thee glory for the reproch which here thou sufferedst; the garment of praise for heaviness; for the lowest place a kingly Throne for ever; there shall the fruit of obedience appear, the labour of repentance rejoyce, and humble subjection shall be gloriously crowned.

7. Now therefore be humbly obedient unto all, and regard not who said or commanded this; but take great heed, that whether thy Superiour, or thy inferior, or thine equall, require any thing of thee, or do insinuate their desire; thou take it all in good part, and endeavour to fulfill it with a sincere will. Let one seek this, another that; let him glory in this, the other in that, and be praised a thousand thousand times; but do thou neither rejoyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy self, and onely in my good pleasure and honour. This art thou to wish, that whether it be by life or death,

God

II.
red
esh
he
for
ist;
for
e.
P-
e,
ti-
li-
or
,
-
g
u
D
K
,
t

God may be alwaies glorified in thee.

CHAP. L.

How a disconsolate person ought to offer himself into the hands of God.

CHRISTIAN. Lord God, Holy Father, be thou blessed both now and for evermore; because as thou wilt, so is it done, and what thou doest, is good. Let thy servant rejoyce in thee, not in himself, nor in any thing else; for thou alone art the true gladnesse, thou art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honour, O Lord. What hath thy servant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any merit of his? Thine is all that thou hast given, and whatsoever thou hast made. I am poor, and in labours from my youth: and sometimes my soul is sorrowfull even unto teares; sometimes also it is troubled in it self by reason of the evils which hang over mine head.

2. I long after the joy of peace, I earnestly crave the peace of thy children that are fed by thee in the light of thy comfort,

If thou give peace, if thou poure into my heart holy joy; the soul of thy servant shall be full of gladnesse, and shall become devout in thy praise: but if thou withdraw thy self, (as many times thou doest) he will not be able to runne the wayes of thy commandments; but rather he will bow his knees, and knock his breast, for it is not now with him as it was heretofore, when thy candle shined upon his head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy wings, from the temptations which violently assaulted him.

3. O righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the hour is come, that thy servant is to be tryed! Behold dear Father, meet it is that in this hour thy servant suffer something for thy sake. O Father evermore to be honoured, the hour is come, which from all eternity thou didst foreknow should come; that for a short time thy servant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly live for ever with thee: that he should be a little despised, humbled, and made as an abject in the sight of men, and much afflicted with passions
and

and infirmities; that he may rise again with thee in the morning of the new light, and be glorified in heaven. Holy Father, thou hast so appointed it, and wilt have it so: and this is fulfilled which thy self hast commanded.

4. It is a favour to thy friend that he may suffer, and be afflicted in the world for love of thee; how often soever, and by whomsoever, thou permittest it to fall upon him. For in the world nothing cometh to passe, without thy counsell, without thy providence, or without a cause why. It is good for me, Lord, that thou hast afflicted me, that I may learn thy righteous judgements, & cast away all haughtinesse of heart, and presumption. It is profitable to me, that shame hath covered my face, that I may rather seek to thee for comfort then to men. I have learned also hereby to dread thy unsearchable judgements, who afflictest the just with the wicked, but not without equitie and justice.

5. I give thee thanks, for that thou hast not spared my sins, but hast worn me

away with bitter stripes, inflicting sorrows, and sending griefs within and without. There is none under heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heavenly Physician of souls, that striketh and healest, bringest down to hell and bringest back again: let thy correction be upon me, and let thy rod instruct me.

6. Behold, dear Father, I am in thy hands, I bow my self under the rod of thy correction: strike my back and my neck too, that my crookednesse may be conformed to thy will. Make me an holy and humble disciple of thine, (as thou art wont well to do) that I may be ready at every beck of thy divine pleasure. I commend my self and all mine unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here, then hereafter. Thou knowest all and every thing, & there is nothing in the conscience of man which can be hidden from thee. Before things are done, thou knowest that they will come to passe, and hast no need that any should teach thee, or admonish thee of those things which are done on earth. Thou knowest what is ex-
pe-

pedient for my profiting, and how much tribulation is fit to scourge off the rust of my finnes. Do with me according to thy desired good pleasure, & disdain me not for my sinfull life, better and more clearly known to none then to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know that which is to be known, to love that which is to be loved, to praise that which pleaseth thee most, to esteem that which is precious unto thee, to despise that which is contemptible in thy sight: suffer me not to judge according to the sight of the outward eyes, nor to give sentence according to the hearing of the cares of ignorant men; but to discern of visible and spirituall things with a true judgement, and above all things ever to search after thy good will and pleasure.

8. The minds of men are often deceived in their judging; the lovers of the world are also deceived in loving onely visible things. What is a man the better, for that he is esteemed great by man? The deceitfull in exalting the deceitfull, the vain man in extolling the vain, the blind in

in commending the blind, the weak in magnifying the weak, deceiveth him, and doth verily more shame him, while he doth vainly praise him. For how much every one is in thy sight, so much he is, and no more.

C H A P. LI.

That a man ought to imploy himself in works of Humility, when strength is wanting for higher imployments.

C H R I S T. Sonne, thou art not able alwayes to continue in the more fervent desire of vertue, nor to persist in the higher pitch of contemplation; but thou must sometimes of necessitie by reason of originall corruption descend to inferiour things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life though against thy will and with grief. As long as thou carriest a mortall bodie, thou shalt feel trouble and heavinesse of heart. Thou oughtest therefore in the flesh oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh: for that thou canst not alwayes continue in spirituall

all exercises and divine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to flie to humble and exteriour works, and to refresh thy self with good actions; to expect with a firm confidence my coming and heavenly visitation, to bear patiently thy banishment and the dryness of thy mind, till I visit thee again, and deliver thee from all anxieties. For I will make thee forget thy former pains, and enjoy inward quietnesse. I will lay open before thee the pleasant fields of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged heart thou maiest begin to runne the way of my commandments. And thou shalt say, *That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.*

CHAP. LII.

That a man ought to esteem himself not worthy of comfort, but rather to deserve stripes.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spi-

spirituall visitation; and therefore thou dealest justly with me, when thou leavest me poore and desolate. For though I could shed a sea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort. For (alas) I deserve nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I have grievously and often offended thee, and have sinned greatly in many things. All things therefore duly considered, I am not worthy even of the least comfort. But thou O gracious and mercifull God, who wilt not that thy works should perish, to shew the riches of thy goodnesse upon the vessels of mercy, even beyond his desert vouchsafest to comfort thy servant above the manner of men. For thy comforts are not like to the words of men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou shouldest bestow any heavenly comfort upon me? I remember not that I have done any good, but have been alwayes prone to sinne, and slow to amendment. This is true, and I cannot denie it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldest stand against me, and there would be none to de.

defend me. What have I deserved for my
 finnes, but hell and everlasting fire? I
 confesse in very truth that I am worthy of
 all scorn and contempt, and it is not fit
 that I should be remembred amongst thy
 holy ones. And although I be unwilling
 to hear this, yet notwithstanding for the
 truths sake I will lay open my sins against
 my self, that so the sooner I may obtain
 of mercie at thy hand.

3. What shall I say being guiltie and
 full of all confusion? I have nothing to
 say but this, I have sinned, Lord, I have
 sinned; have mercy on me, pardon me;
 suffer me a little, that I may bewail my
 grief, before I go unto the land of dark-
 nesse, a land covered with the shadow of
 death. What dost thou so much require
 of a guiltie and miserable sinner, as that he
 be contrite, and humble himself for his of-
 fences? of true contrition and humbling
 of the heart, ariseth hope of forgivenesse;
 the troubled conscience is reconciled [to
 God,] the favour of God which was lost,
 is recovered; man is preserved from the
 wrath to come, and God and the peni-
 tent

tent soul meet together with an holy kisse.

4. Humble contrition for sins is an acceptable sacrifice unto thee, O Lord, favouring much sweeter in thy presence then the perfume of frankincense. This is also the pleasant ointment, which thou wouldst should be poured upon thy sacred feet: for thou never despisest a contrite and humbled heart. There is the place of refuge, from the angry face of the enemy; there is amended and washed away, whatsoever defilement elsewhere was contracted, and whatsoever is polluted.

CHAP. LIII.

That the grace of God doth not joyne it self with those that savour of earthly things.

CHRIST. Sonne, my grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with externall things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hinderances of grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self,

self, love to live alone with thy self, desire the conversation of none; but rather poure out devout prayers unto God, that thou maist keep thy mind in compunction and thy conscience pure. Esteem the whole world as nothing; preferre attendance upon God before all outward things: for thou canst not attend upon me, and be delighted also in transitorie vanities. Thou oughtest to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance and friends, and to keep thy mind void of all temporall comfort. So the blessed Apostle Peter required, that the faithfull of Christ should keep themselves as strangers and pilgrimes in this world.

2. O how great a confidence shall he have at the hour of death, whom no affection to any earthly thing detaineth in the world! But the sickly mind is not yet capable of so retired a heart; neither doth the carnall man understand the liberty of him who is inwardly recollected. Notwithstanding if he will be truly spirituall, he ought to renounce as well those which are strangers, as those which are near unto him;

him; and to beware of no man more than of himself. If thou perfectly overcome thy self, thou shalt with more ease subdue the rest. It is a perfect victorie to triumph over our selves. For he that keepeth himself subject in such sort, that his sensuality be subdued to reason, and reason in all things be obedient to me; he is truly a conquerour of himself, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou desire to mount unto this height, thou must set out couragiously, and lay the axe to the root; that thou maist pluck up and destroy that hidden inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and earthly good. Of this sinne (that man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is thoroughly to be overcome: which evil being once overcome & subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillitie. But for that few endeavour perfectly to die unto themselves, and altogether to go out of themselves, therefore they remain intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above them-

fel-

lives. But he that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessary that he mortifie all evill and inordinate affections, and that he should not earnestly adhere unto any creature by private love.

C H A P. LIV.

*Of the different motions of Nature
and Grace.*

C H R I S T. Sonne, mark diligently the motions of *Nature*, & *Grace*; for in a very contrary & subtill manner these are removed, and can hardly be discerned out by him that is spiritually & inwardly enlightened. All men indeed desire that which is good, and pretend some good in their words and deeds; and therefore under the shew of good, many are deceived. *Nature* is crafty, and seduceth, intangleth, and deceiveth many, and alwayes proposeth her self for her end; but *Grace* walketh in simplicity, and avoideth all shew of evil, pretendeth not deceipts; and doth all things purely for Gods sake, in whom also she finally resteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die, nor
be

be kept down, nor be overcome, nor be subject to any, nor be subdued: but *Grace* mindeth self-mortification; resisteth sensuality, seeketh to be subject, is willing to be kept under, and will not use her own libertie: she loveth to be kept under discipline, and desireth not to rule any, but alwayes to live and remain wholly subject unto God, and for God is ready humbly to bow unto all men. *Nature* striveth for her own commoditie; and considereth what profit she may reap by another; but *Grace* considereth not what is profitable and commodious unto her self, but rather what is profitable to many. *Nature* willingly receiveth honour and reverence: but *Grace* faithfully attributeth all honour and glory unto God.

3. *Nature* feareth shame and contempt; but *Grace* rejoyceth to suffer reproch for the name of Jesus. *Nature* loveth idlenesse and bodily rest; but *Grace* cannot be idle, but willingly imbraceth labour. *Nature* seeketh to have those things that be curious and glorious, abhor-

horreth that which is mean and course;
but *Grace* delighteth in plain and humble
things, despiseth not rough things, nor re-
fuseth to wear that which is old and torn.
Nature respecteth temporall things, re-
joyceth at earthly gain, sorroweth for loss,
is moved with every little injurious word;
but *Grace* thinketh on that which is ever-
lasting, and cleaveth not to temporall
things; she is not troubled with losses,
nor disquieted with hard words; for that
she hath placed her treasure & joy in hea-
ven, where nothing perisheth.

4. *Nature* is covetous, and doth more
willingly receive then give, she loveth
proper and private things; but *Grace* is
bountifull and liberall to all; she shunneth
private interest, is content with a little,
thinketh that it is more blessed to give
then to receive. *Nature* is bent to the crea-
tures, to her own flesh, to vanities, and to
many vagaries: but *Grace* draweth unto
God and unto goodnesse, renounceth
creatures, flieth the world, hateth the de-
sires of the flesh, restraineth wandrings a
broad, blusheth to be seen in publick

Nature is willing to have some outward comfort, wherein she may be sensibly delighted: but *Grace* seeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth above all visible things in the highest good.

5. *Nature* worketh all for her own gain and profit, she can do nothing freely, but for bestowed benefits she hopeth to obtain either that which is equall, or better, either praise or favour, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much esteemed: but *Grace* seeketh no temporall thing, nor desireth any other reward than God alone; nor asketh more of temporall necessaries, then what may serve her for the obtaining of things eternall.

6. *Nature* rejoyceth to have many friends and kinsfolks, she glorieth of noble place and birth; pleaseth the powerful, fawneth upon the rich, applaudeth those that are like herself: but *Grace* loveth even her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of friends; nor esteemeth place or birth, but where it is joyned with greater virtue; she rather favoureth the poor then the rich; hath more com-

passion of the innocent then the powerfull; rejoyceth in the true, not in the deceitfull; alwaies exhorteth good men to labour for the better gifts, and by goodnesse to resemble the Sonne of God. *Nature* quickly complaineeth of want and trouble: *Grace* constantly endureth need.

7. *Nature* referreth all things to her self, striveth and contendeth for herself: but *Grace* reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed: she ascribeth no good to her self, neither doth she arrogantly presume: she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others; but in every apprehension and opinion submitteth her self unto the eternall wisdom and to the divine judgement. *Nature* coveteth to know secrets, and to hear news; she will appear abroad, and make proof of many things by her own senses; she desireth to be known, and to do those things, for which she may be praised and admired; but *Grace* careth not for hearing news, nor to understand curious matters; for that all this springeth from the old corruption of man, seeing

here is nothing new and durable upon earth. She teacheth therefore to restrain the senses, to avoid vain pleasing and ostentation, humbly to hide those things that are worthy of praise and admiration; and of every thing and every knowledge to seek profitable fruit, and the praise and honour of God: she will not have herself nor hers publickly praised, but desireth that God should be blessed in his gifts, who of mere love bestoweth all things.

8. This *Grace* is a supernaturall light, and a certain speciall gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledge of everlasting salvation; which raiseth up a man from earthly things to love the things of heaven, and of a carnall maketh him a spirituall man. How much the more therefore *Nature* is depressed and subdued, so much the greater *grace* is infused, and the inward man daily by new visitations more reformed according to the image of God.

CHAP. LV.

Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.

CHRISTIAN. O Lord my God, who hast created me after thy Image and likenesse, grant me this grace which thou hast shewed to be so great and so necessary to salvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to sinne and to perdition. For I feel in my flesh the law of sinne, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the obeying of sensuality in many things : neither can I resist the passions thereof, unlesse thy most holy grace fervently infused into my heart, do assist me.

2. Thy grace, O Lord, and great grace is needfull, that nature may be overcome, which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by Adam the first man, nature being fallen and corrupted by sinne, the penalty of this stain hath descended upon all mankind, in such sort, that nature it self which by thee was created good and

upright, is now accounted for the sinne and for the infirmitie of corrupted nature; for that the motion thereof left unto it self draweth to evil and to inferiour things. For the little power which remaineth, is like a certain spark lying hidden in ashes. This is naturall reason it self, encompassed about with great darknesse, yet still retaining power to discern good and evil, and the difference between true and false; although it be unable to fulfill all that it approveth; and enjoyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the soundnesse of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that after the inward man I delight in thy law, knowing thy commandments to be good, just, and holy, reprovng also all evil and sin, teaching that it is to be avoided. But with the flesh I serve the law of sinne, whilst I rather obey sensualitie then reason. Hence it is that to will to do good is present with me, but how to perform it I finde not. For this cause I often purpose many good things, but because I want grace to help my weaknesse, upon a light resistance

II.
ne
na-
un-
our
re-
id-
it
rk-
ern
be-
an-
en-
nor
he
ng
nd
ea-
ith
st I
on.
set
de
ny
to
st-
ce

ance I go back and faint. Hence it is that I know the way of perfection, and see clearly enough what I ought to do; but pressed down with the weight of mine own corruption, I rise not unto what is more perfect.

4. O Lord, how exceeding needfull is thy grace for me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accomplish it? For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth strengthen me. O heavenly grace indeed, without which our most worthy actions are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be esteemed. Arts, riches, beautie or strength, wit or eloquence, are of no value with thee, O Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and bad; but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and love; and they that bear this honourable marke, are esteemed worthy of everlasting life. This grace is so eminent, that neither the gift of prophesie, nor the working of miracles, nor any speculation (how high soever) is of any esteem without it. Nei-

ther faith, nor hope, nor other virtues are acceptable unto thee without love and grace.

5. O most blessed Grace, that makest the poore in spirit rich in virtues, and makest the rich in many blessings to be humble in heart; come, come down unto me, replenish me early with thy comfort, lest my soul should faint for wearinesse and driness of mind. I beseech thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in thy sight; for thy grace is sufficient for me, though other things that nature desireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear any evils, whilest thy grace is with me: that is my strength; that giveth advise and help; that is stronger then all enemies, and wiser then all the wise.

6. Thy grace is the mistresse of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace in affliction, the driver away of sorrow, the expeller of fear, the nurse of devotion, the mother of tears. What am I without it, but a withered piece of wood, and an unprofitable stalk
ons-

onely meet to be cast away? Let thy grace therefore, O Lord, alwayes prevent me and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, through Jesus Christ thy Sonne, Amen.

C H A P. L V I.

That we ought to denie our selves, and imitate Christ by the Crosse.

CH R I S T. Sonne, look how much thou goest out of thy self, so much maiest thou enter into me. As to be void of all desire of externall things, maketh inward peace; so the forsaking of our selves inwardly, joyneth us to God. I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy self to my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Without the way there is no going aright, without truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow; the truth which thou oughtest to trust; the life for which thou oughtest to hope. I am the way inviolable, the truth infal-
li-

lible, the life which cannot end. I am the most straight way, the supreme truth, the true life, yea the blessed life, the uncreated life. If thou remain in my way thou shalt keep the truth, & the truth shall make thee free, & thou shalt lay hold on everlastīg life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: if thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, sell all. If thou wilt be my Disciple, deny thy self. If thou wilt possess a blessed life, despise this present life. If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thy self upon earth. If thou wilt reign with me, bear the crosse with me. For onely the servants of the crosse find the way of blisse and true light.

3. CHRISTIAN. Lord Iesus, forasmuch as thy way is narrow and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in suffering worldly contempt. For the servant is not greater then his Lord, nor the Disciple above his Master. Let thy servant be exercised in thy holy life, for therein my salvation and the true holinesse doth consist: whatsoever I read or hear besides it, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. CHRIST.

4. CHRIST. Sonne, now that thou knowest and hast read these things, happy shalt thou be, if thou do them. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him, and will make him sit with me in the Kingdome of my Father.

CHRISTIAN. Lord Jesus, as thou hast said and promised, so let it come to passe, and grant that I may not wholly undeserve this favour. I have received the crosse, I have received it from thy hand; I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou hast laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good retired person is the crosse; but yet it is a guide to Paradise. It is now begun, it is not lawfull to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let us then take courage, my Brethren, and go forwards together: Jesus will be with us. For Jesus's sake we have undertaken this crosse; for Iesus's sake let us persevere in the crosse. He will be our helper, who is our guide and forerunner. Behold our King goeth before us, who also

so will fight for us: let us follow him manfully, let none be dismayed; but be we ready to die valiantly in the battel, and let us not blemish our glory by flying from the Crosse.

C H A P. LVII.

That a man be not too much dejected, when he falleth into some defects.

CH R I S T. Sonne, patience and humility in adversities are more pleasing to me, then much comfort and devotion in prosperities. Why art thou grieved for every little trifle spoken and done against thee? Although it had been much more, thou oughtest not to have been moved. But now let it passe; it is not the first that hath happened, nor is it any new thing, neither shall it be the last, if thou live long. Thou art manly enough, as long as no adversity happeneth. Thou canst give good counsell also, and canst strengthen others with thy words: but when any tribulation suddenly cometh to thy door, thou art destitute of counsell and strength. See therefore thy great frailty

y, which thou often hast experience of in every small occurrence. It is notwithstanding intended for thy good, when these and such like things befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart the best thou canst, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deject thee, nor trouble thee long: bear it at least patiently, if thou canst not joyfully. Although thou be unwilling to hear it, and conceivest indignation thereat, yet restrain thy self, and suffer no inordinate word to passe out of thy mouth, whereby the little ones may be offended. The storm which now is raised shall quickly be appeased, and inward grief shall be sweetened by the return of grace. I yet live, saith the Lord, and am ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort then before, if thou put thy trust in me and callest devoutly upon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy self to greater suffering. All is not lost, if thou feel thy self often afflicted or grievously tempted. Thou art a man, and not God: thou art flesh, not an Angel. How canst thou look to continue ever in
the

the same state of virtue, when an Angel in heaven hath fallen, as also the first man in Paradise? I am he who will strengthen with health them that mourn, and do raise up unto divine glory those that know their own infirmity.

4. CHRISTIAN. Lord, blessed be thy word, more sweet unto my mouth then the hony and the hony-comb. What should I do in these my so great tribulations and straits, unlesse thou didst comfort me with thy holy words? What matter is it, how much, and what I suffer, so as I may at length attain to the port of salvation? Grant me a good end, grant me a happy passage out of this world. Be mindfull of me, O my God, and direct me the right way to thy Kingdome. Amen.

CHAP. LVIII.

Of not searching into high matters, and into the secret judgements of God.

CHRIST. Sonne, beware thou dispute not of high matters, nor of the secret judgements of God, why this man is left, and that man taken into so great

great favour: why also this man is so much afflicted, and that man so greatly advanced. These things are beyond the reach of man, neither can any reason or disputation search out the judgement of God. When the Enemy therefore suggesteth these things unto thee, or some curious people enquire of thee, answer that of the Prophet, *Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgement is right.* And again, *The judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.* My judgements are to be feared, not to be discussed; for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the understanding of man.

2. In like manner I advise thee not to enquire, nor dispute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier then the other, and which is greater in the Kingdom of heaven. These things oftentimes breed strife and unprofitable contentions, thy nourish also pride and vain glory; from whence do spring envie and dissentions, whilst one will proudly preferre this, and the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things,
is

is to no purpose; nor would it please the S^{ts}; for I am not the God of dissention, but of peace: which peace consisteth rather in true humilitie, then in self-exaltation.

3. Some are carried with zeal of affection, to love these or those most: but this love is rather humane then divine. I am he who made all the Saints, and have given them grace: I have given them glory. I know what every one hath deserved; I have prevented them with the blessings of my goodnesse. I foreknew my beloved before the beginning of the world. I chose them out of the world, they chose not me first. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through fundrie temptations. I have powred into them glorious comforts, I have given them perseverance, I have crowned their patience.

4. I know both the first and the last: I embrace all with inestimable love. I am to be praised in all my Saints: I am to be blessed above all things, and to be honoured in every one, whom I have thus gloriously exalted and predestinated without

out any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoureth not the greatest; for that I made both the lesse and the greater: And he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me, and all the rest in the Kingdome of heaven. There all are one through the bond of Love; they think the same, they will the same, and they all love one another.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more then themselves or any merits of their own. For being raviſhed above themselves, and drawn out of all self-love, they are wholly carried out to love me, in whom also they do fruitively rest. Nothing can turn them back, nothing can presse them down; for being full of the eternall Truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable love. Let therefore carnall and naturall men who can affect no other but their private joyes, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They adde and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaseth the eternall Truth.

6. Many are ignorant, but specially those that be slenderly enlightned; and these can seldome love any with a perfect spirituall love. They are as yet much drawn by a naturall affection and humane friendship to this man or to that; and according to the experience they have of themselves in their earthly affections, so they frame an imagination of heavenly things. But there is an incomparable distance between the things which the imperfect ones imagine in their conceits, and those which the illuminated ones do see by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Sonne, that thou treat not curiously of these things, which exceed thy knowledge: but rather so apply thy endeavours, that thou maist at least have the meanest place in the Kingdome of heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceeded others in sanctity, or were greater in the Kingdome of heaven; what would this knowledge avail him, unlesse he should thereby humble himself the more in my sight, and should rise up into the greater
prai.

praising of my name? He pleaseth God much better, that thinketh of the greatnesse of his finnes, and the smallnesse of his graces, and how farre off he is from the perfection of the Saints; than he that disputeth of their greatnesse or littlenesse.

8. They are well and right well contented, if men could content themselves and refrain from these vain discourses. They glory not of their own merits, for they ascribe no good unto themselves, but attribute all to me, who of my infinite love have given them all things. They are filled with so great love of the Divinity, and with such an overflowing joy, that there is no glory nor happinesse, that is or can be wanting unto them. All the Saints, how much the higher they be in glory, so much the more humble they are in themselves, and nearer and dearer unto me: And therefore it is written, That they did cast their Crowns before God, and fell down upon their face before the Lamb, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever.

9. Many inquire who is greatest in the

Kingdome of God, that know not whether they shall ever be numbred thereamongst the least. It is a great thing to be even the least in heaven, where all are great: for that all there shall be called, and shall be indeed, the Sonnes of God. *The least shall become a thousand; and the sinner of an hundred years shall die:* For when the Disciples asked who should be greatest in the Kingdome of heaven, they received this answer, Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdome of heaven: Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdome of heaven.

10. Woe be unto them that disdain to humble themselves willingly with little children. For the low gate of the Kingdome of heaven will not give them entrance. And woe be to the rich, that have their comforts here: for whilest the poor enter into the Kingdome of God, they shall stand lamenting without. Rejoyce you that be humble, and you that be poor be you glad, for yours is the Kingdome of

of God, if you walk according to the truth.

CHAP. LIX.

That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone.

CHRISTIAN. Lord, what trust have I in this life? Or what is the greatest comfort, that all things under heaven do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whose mercies are without number? Where hath it been well with me without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert present? I had rather be poor for thee, then rich without thee. I rather choose to be a pilgrime on earth with thee, then to possesse heaven without thee. Where thou art, there is heaven: and there is death and hell, where thou art not. Thou art my desire, and therefore it behoveth me to sigh and cry and pray unto thee. For I have none fully to trust in, none that can seasonably help me in my necessities, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, thou art my trust; thou art my com-

forter, and most faithfull unto me in all things.

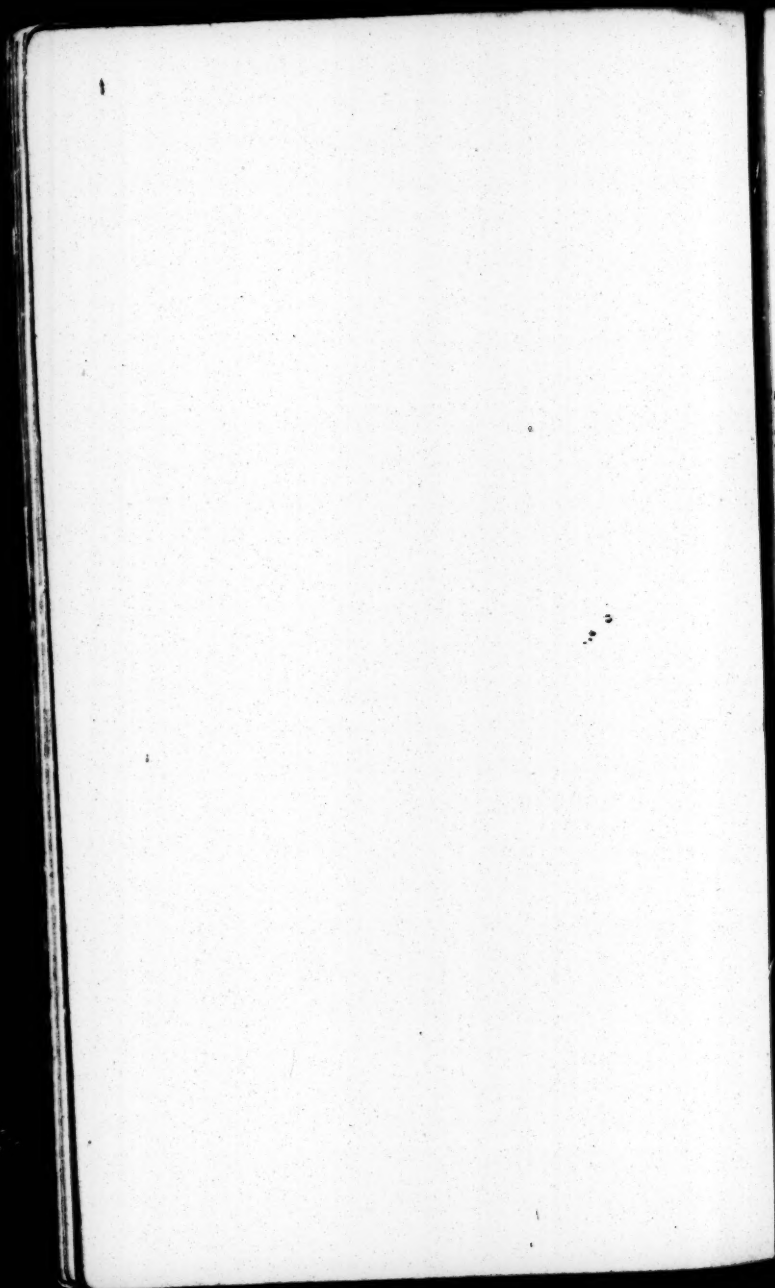
2. All men seek their own gain; thou onely seekest my salvation and my profit, and turnest all things to my good. Although thou exposest me to divers temptations and aduersities, yet thou orderest all this to my advantage, who art wont to try thy beloved ones a thousand waies. In which triall thou oughtest no lesse to be loved and praised, then if thou didst fill me with heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, O Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge: in thee I place my tribulation and anguish; for I find all to be weak and unconstant, whatsoever I behold out of thee. For neither can many friends avail, nor strong helpers aid, nor wise counsellours give any profitable answer, nor the books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any secret or pleasant place defend: if thou thy self dost not assist, help, strengthen, comfort, instruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that seem to belong to the attainment of peace and felicity,
with-

III.
n all
hou
ofit,
Al-
em-
erest
at to
ies.
e to
t fill
d, I
ee I
or I
at-
her
ers
ofi-
ed
ny
ou
n,
ng
y,
h-

without thee are nothing, and do bring indeed no felicity at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the height of life, the depth of wisdom: and the strongest comfort of thy servants is to trust in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes: in thee O my God, the Father of mercies, I put my trust. Bless and sanctify my soul with thy heavenly blessings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the seat of thy eternall glory: and that nothing may be found in the Temple of thy glory, that may offend the eyes of thy Majesty. According to the greatnesse of thy goodness, and multitude of thy mercies look upon me, and hear the prayer of thy poor servant, who is far exiled from thee in the land of the shadow of death. Protect and keep the soul of thy servant, amidst so many dangers of this corruptible life, and by thy grace accompanying me direct it by the way of peace, to the countrey of everlasting light. Amen.



THE FOURTH BOOK.

*A devout Exhortation unto the holy
Communion.*

The voice of Christ.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you, saith the Lord. The bread which I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world. Take ye and eat, this is my body that is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. The words which I have spoken unto you, are spirit and life.

CHAP. I.

*With how great reverence Christ ought to
be received.*

The voice of the Disciple.

THese are thy words, O Christ the everlasting Truth, though not spoken all at one time, nor written in one
and

and the self-same place. Because therefore they are thine and true, they are all thankfully and faithfully to be received by me. They are thine, and thou hast spoken them; and they are mine also, because thou hast spoken them for my salvation. I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart. These so gracious words, so full of sweetnesse and love, do encourage me, but mine own offences do dishearten me, and my impure conscience driveth me back from the receiving of so great mysteries. The sweetnesse of thy words doth encourage me, but the multitude of my sinnes doth oppress me.

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee; and to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting life and glory. Come, saist thou, unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you. O sweet and loving word in the eare of a sinner, that thou, my Lord God, shouldest invite the poore and

and needie to the participation of thy most holy bodie. But who am I, Lord, that I may presume to approch unto thee? behold the heavens cannot contain thee, and thou saist, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth this so gracious a condescension, and this so loving invitation? How shall I dare to come, that know not any good in my self, whereupon I may presume? How shall I bring thee unto my house, that have so often offended thy most gracious countenance? The Angels and the Archangels honour thee, the Saints and just men do fear thee; and saist thou, Come ye all unto me? Unlessse thou, O Lord, didst say it, who would believe it to be true? And unlessse thou didst command it, who would attempt to come unto thee? Behold No-ah a just man laboured a hundred years in the making of the Ark, that he might be saved with a few; and how can I in one houres space prepare my self to receive with reverence the Maker of the world?

4. Moses thy great servant, and thy especial friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which also he covered with most pure Gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein: and I a corruptible creature, how shall I dare so lightly to receive the Maker of the Law, and the giver of life? Solomon the wisest of the Kings of Israel bestowed seven years in building a magnificent Temple to the praise of thy name, and celebrated the feast of the Dedication thereof eight dayes together: he offered a thousand peace-offerings, and he solemnly set the Ark in the place prepared for it, with the sound of trumpets, and joy; and I the most miserable and poorest of men, how shall I bring thee into my house, that cā scarce spend one half houre religiously? and I wish I could once spend about one half houre in a worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavour to please thee, and alas how little is that which I do! How little time do I spend to prepare my self to receive! I am seldome wholly recollected, very
sel-

scarcely free from all distraction; and yet surely no unbecoming thought ought to appear in the comfortable presence of thy Deitie, nor any creature wholly take me up: for I am not to harbour an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference between the Ark of the Covenant with it's reliques, and thy most pure body with it's unspeakable virtues: between those legall sacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all ancient Sacrifices. Why therefore am I not more zealous in thy venerable presence? Wherefore do I not prepare my self with greater care to receive thy holy things; sith those holy ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, yea Kings also and Princes, with the whole people, have shewed such an affectionatenesse of devotion to thy divine service?

7. The most devout King David danced before the Ark of God with all his might, calling to mind the benefits bestowed in times past upon his Forefathers. He made Instruments of sundrie kinds,

kinds, he published Psalmes, and appointed them to be sung with joy: he also oftentimes sung to the harp, being inspired with the grace of the holy Ghost. He taught the people of Israel to praise God with their whole heart, and with pleasant voices every day to bless and praise him. If so great devotion was then used, and such celebrating of divine praise before the Ark of the Testament, what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me and all Christian people, at the Sacrament, in receiving the most precious body of Christ?

9. O God the invisible Creatour of the world, how wonderfully dost thou deal with us! how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose of all things with thine elect, to whom thou offerest thy self to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all understanding! This chiefly draweth the hearts of the religious, and inflameth their affections. For thy true faithfull servants that dispose their whole life to amendment, by this most precious Sacrament oftentimes gain much of the
grace

face of devotion, and love of holinesse.
 10. O the admirable and hidden grace
 of this Sacrament, which only the faith-
 full ones of Christ do know: but the un-
 believing, and such as are slaves unto sin,
 cannot have experience thereof! In this
 sacrament spirituall grace is given, and
 strength which was lost is restored in the
 soul, and the beauty disfigured by sin re-
 turneth again. This grace is sometimes
 so great, that out of the fulnesse of devo-
 tion which is here given, not onely the
 mind, but the weak body also, feeleth
 great increase of strength,

11. Our coldnesse & negligence sure-
 ly is much to be bewailed and pittied, that
 we are not drawn with greater affection
 to receive Christ, in whom all the hope
 and merit of those that are to be saved
 doth consist. For he is our sanctification
 and redemption: he is the comfort of
 those who are here but travellers, and the
 everlasting fruition of Saints. It is much
 therefore to be lamented that many do so
 little consider this comfortable myserie,
 which rejoyceth heaven, and preserveth
 the

the whole world. O the blindnesse and hardnesse of mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh so unspeakable a gift, but rather cometh by the daily use thereof to regard it little or nothing.

12. For if this most holy Sacrament should be celebrated in one place onely and consecrated by one onely Minister in the world; with how great desire dost thou think would men be affected to that place, and to such a Minister, that they might enjoy the celebration of these divine mysteries? But now there are many Ministers, and Christ is offered in many places; that so the grace and love of God to man may appear so much the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is spread through the world. Thanks be unto thee good Iesus, the everlasting shepherd that hast vouchsafed to refresh us who are poor and in a state of banishment, with thy precious body and blood, and to invite us to the receiving of these mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

CHAP. II.

*That the great goodnesse and love of God
is exhibited to man in this Sacrament.*

The voice of the Disciple.

IN confidence of thy goodnesse and
great mercy, O Lord, being sick, I ap-
proch unto my Saviour, being hungrie &
thirstie to the fountain of life, needie to
the King of heaven, a servant unto my
Lord, a creature to my Creatour, being
disconsolate I come to thee my mercifull
Comforter. But whence is this to me,
that thou vouchsafest to come unto me?
Who am I that thou shouldest give thy
self unto me? How dare a sinner appear
before thee? And how is it that thou dost
vouchsafe to come unto a sinner? Thou
knowest thy servant, and seest that he
hath no good thing in him, for which
thou shouldest bestow this favour upon
him. I confesse therefore my unworthi-
nesse, and I acknowledge thy goodnesse;
I praise thy mercy, and give thee thanks
for this thy transcendent love. For thou

T

doest

doest this for thine own sake, not for any merits of mine; to the end that thy goodness may be better known unto me, thy love more abundantly shewed, and thy gracious condescension may be the more eminently set forth. Since therefore it is thy pleasure, and thou hast commanded that it should be so, this thy favour is also dearly pleasing to me, and I wish that my sins may be no hinderance herein.

2. O most sweet and benigne Iesus, how great reverence and thanks together with perpetuall praise, is due unto thee for the receiving of thy sacred bodie, whose preciousnesse no man is able to expresse! But what shall I think of at this Communion, now that I am to approach unto my Lord, whom I am not able duly to honour, and yet I desire to receive him with devotion? What can I think better, and more profitable, then to humble my self wholly before thee, & to exalt thy infinite goodness above me? I praise thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever, and I do despise, and submit my self unto thee, in a dear sense of my own unworthiness.

3. Be

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of sinners ! Behold thou inclineſt unto me, who am not worthy ſo much as to look up unto thee ! Behold thou comeſt unto me ! it is thy will to be with me, thou inviteſt me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of heaven, and bread of Angels to eat, which is no other indeed then thy ſelf, the living bread, that deſcendeſt from heaven, and giveſt life unto the world.

4. Behold from whence doth this love proceed ! what a gracious condeſcention of thine appeareth herein ! How great thanks and praiſes are due unto thee for theſe benefits ! O how good and profitable was thy counſell, when thou ordainedſt it ! How ſweet and pleaſant the banquet, when thou gavelt thy ſelf to our food ! How wonderfull is this thy doing, O Lord, how mighty is thy power, how unſpeakable is thy truth ! For thou ſaideſt the word, and all things were made ; and this was done which thou commandedſt.

5. A thing of great admiration, that
T 2 thou

thou, my Lord God, true God and Man
shouldest be exhibited unto us by the ele
ments of bread and wine. Thou who art
the Lord of all things, and standest in
need of none, hast pleased to dwell in us
by means of this thy Sacrament: preserve
my heart and body unspotted, that with
a chearfull and pure conscience I may o
ten celebrate thy mysteries, and receive
them to my everlasting health; which
thou hast chiefly ordained and instituted
for thy honour, and for a perpetuall me
moriall.

6. Rejoyce, O my soul, & give thanks
unto God for so noble a gift, and so sin
gular a comfort left unto thee in this va
le of tears. For as often as thou callest to
mind this mysterie, and receivest the bo
dy of Christ; so often dost thou remem
ber the work of thy redemption, and art
made partaker of all the merits of Christ.
For the love of Christ is never diminishe
d, and the greatnesse of his propitiation
never exhausted. Therefore thou ought
est alwaies to dispose thy self hereunto
by a fresh renewing of thy mind, and to
weigh

weigh with attentive consideration this great mystery of thy salvation. So great, sweet, and joyfull it ought to seem unto thee, when thou comest to these holy mysteries; as if the same day Christ first descending into the womb of the Virgin, there become man; or hanging on the crosse did suffer and die for the salvation of mankind.

CHAP. III.

That it is profitable to communicate often.

The voice of the Disciple.

BEhold, O Lord, I come unto thee, that I may be comforted in thy gift, and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O God, hast prepared in thy goodness for the poor. Behold in thee all whatsoever I can or ought to desire: thou art my salvation and my redemption, my hope and my strength, my honour and my glory. Make joyfull therefore this day the soul of thy servant, for that I have lifted it up to thee, O Lord Jesus. I desire to receive thee now with de-

votion and reverence. I do long to bring thee into my house, that with Zacheus may obtain to be blessed by thee, and to be numbred amongst the children of Abraham. My soul thirsteth to receive thee in my bodie, my heart desireth to be united with thee.

2. Give thy self to me, and it sufficeth for besides thee no comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy visitation. And therefore I must often come unio thee, and receive thee for the welfare of my soul; lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy heavenly food. For so, most mercifull Iesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people and curing sundry diseases, *I will not send them home fasting, lest they faint in the way.* Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast vouchsafed to leave thy self in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithfull. For thou art the sweet refection of the soul; and he that eateth thee worthily, shall be partaker and heir of everlasting glory. It is necessary for me, that do so often fall and sinne

sinne, and so quickly wax dull and faint, that by frequent prayer and confession, and receiving of thy holy bodie, I renew, cleanse, and inflame my self; lest perhaps by long abstaining I should fall from my holy purpose.

3. For the imaginations of man are prone unto evil from his youth, and unlesse some divine remedie help him, he quickly slideth to worse. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil, and strengtheneth in good. For if I be now so often slack and cold when I communicate, or celebrate; what would become of me if I received not this remedy, and sought not after so great an help? Though every day I be not fit, nor well prepared to communicate; I will endeavour notwithstanding at due times to receive the divine mysteries, and to be partaker of so great a grace. For this is one chief comfort of a faithfull soul, whilest she wandereth from thee in this mortall body, that being often mindfull of her God, she receive her Beloved with a devout mind.

4. O the wonderfull condescent of thy mercie toward us, that thou O Lord God, the Creatour and giver of life to all spirits, dost vouchsafe to come unto a poore soul, and with thy whole Deitie and Humanitie to replenish her hunger! Ohappie mind and blessed soul, that obtaines to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with spirituall joy! O how great a Lord doth she entertain! How beloved a guest doth she harbour! how pleasant a companion doth she receive! how faithfull a friend doth she take in! how lovely and noble a spouse doth she embrace! She embraceth him who is to be loved above all that is beloved, and above all things that may be desired. Let heaven and earth and all their furniture be silent in thy presence: for what praise and beautie soever they have, it is received from thy bountie, and shall not equall the beautie of thy name, whose wisdome is infinite.

C H A P. I V.

*that many benefits are bestowed upon them
that communicate devoutly.*

The voice of the Disciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy servant with the blessings of thy sweetnesse, that I may approach worthily and devoutly to thy glorious Sacrament: stirre up my heart unto thee, and deliver me from all dullnesse: visit me with thy salvation, that I may taste in spirit thy sweetnesse, which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as in a fountain. Enlighten also my eyes to behold so great a mysterie, and strengthen me to believe it with undoubted faith. For it is thy work, and not mans power; thy sacred institution, not mans invention. For no man is of himself able to comprehend and understand these things, which surpasse the understanding even of Angels. What therefore shall I unworthy sinner, dust and ashes, be able to search and comprehend of so high and sacred a mysterie.

2. O Lord in the simplicitie of my heart, with a good and firm faith, and at thy commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do truly believe that thou art present in the Sacrament. Thy will is, that I receive thee and that by love I unite my self unto thee. Wherefore I implore thy mercy, and do crave thy speciall grace, to the end I may wholly melt and flow over with love unto thee, and hereafter never harbour any externall comfort. For this most high and worthy Sacrament is the health of the soul and bodie, the remedie of all spirituall weaknesse: hereby my vices are cured, my passions bridled, temptations overcome or weakened, greater grace is infused, virtue begun increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened, and love inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou hast bestowed, and still oftentimes dost bestow, many benefits in this Sacrament upon thy beloved ones that communicate devoutly, O my God, the Protector of my soul, the strengthener of humane frailtie, and the giver of all inward

ward comfort. Thou impartest unto them much comfort against sundrie tribulations; & liftest them up from the depth of their own dejectednesse, to hope in thy protection; and doest inwardly refresh and illustrate them with new grace, so that they who before Communion felt themselves heavie and indisposed, afterwards being refreshed with heavenly meat and drink, do find in themselves a great change to the better. And in such a way of dispensation thou dealest with thy elect, that they may truly acknowledge and patiently prove, how great their own infirmitie is, and what goodnesse and grace they receive from thee. For they of themselves are cold, dull, and undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, cheerful, and full of devotion. For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the fountain of sweetnesse, doth not carry away from thence at least some little sweetnesse? Or who standing by a great fire, receiveth not some small heat thereby? Thou art a fountain alwayes full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Where-

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw out of the full fountain it self, nor drink my fill; I will notwithstanding set my lips to the mouth of this heavenly conduit, that I may draw from thence at least some small drop to refresh my thirst; that so I may not be wholly dried up. And though I be not altogether heavenly, nor so inflamed as the Cherubins and Seraphins, notwithstanding I will endeavour to apply my self to devotion, and prepare my heart to obtain some small spark of divine fire, by humble receiving of this enlivening Sacrament. And whatsoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Iesus, most holy Saviour, do thou supply for me, most bountifully and graciously, who hast vouchsafed to call us unto thee, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

5. I indeed labour in the sweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of heart, I am bardened with sinnes, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppressed with many evil passions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and
save

Save me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I commit my self, and all that is mine, that thou maist keep me and bring me to life everlasting. Receive me to the honour and glory of thy name, who hast prepared thy Body and Bloud to be my meat and my drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, the zeal of my devotion may increase.

C H A P. V.

Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministeriall function.

The voice of Christ.

IF thou hadst Angelicall purity, and the sanctity of S. Iohn Baptist, thou wert not worthy to receive this Sacrament. For it is not within the compasse of the deserts of men, that man should consecrate the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the bread of Angels. A great mystery, and great is the dignity of the Ministers of God, to whom is given that which is not given to the Angels. It is proper for
Mi-

Ministers rightly instituted in the Church, to have power to celebrate, and consecrate the body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, using the word of God, by Gods commandment and appointment; but God is there the principall Authour, and invisible Worker; to whom is subject all that he pleaseth, and all that he commandeth doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore more to believe God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, then thine own sense, or any visible signe. And therefore thou art to come unto this Mystery with fear and reverence. Consider attentively with thy self, and see what that is, whereof the Ministry is delivered unto thee by the imposition of the hands of the Bishop. Behold thou art made a Priest, and consecrated to celebrate: see now that in due time thou doest this faithfully & devoutly, and carry thy self so, as thou maist be without reproof. Thou hast not lightened thy burden, but art now bound with a straiter band of discipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of sanctity. A
Mini-

Minister ought to be adorned with all graces, and to give example of good life to others. His conversation should not be according to the ordinary and common course of men, but like to the Angels in heaven, or to perfect men on earth.

3. A Minister is the Vicegerent of Christ, to pray humbly with a prostrate mind unto God for himself and the whole people. Neither ought he to cease from prayer till he obtain grace and mercie. When a Minister doth celebrate, he honoureth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living, and maketh himself partaker of all good.

C H A P. VI.

*An interrogation of the exercise before
Communion.*

The voice of the Disciple.

WHen I weigh thy worthinesse, O Lord, and my unworthinesse, I tremble, and am confounded in my self. For if I come not unto thee, I flie from life; and if I unworthily intrude my self,
I

I incur thy displeasure. What therefore shall I do my God, my helper, and my counsellor in necessitie?

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me some exercise futable to this holy Communion. For it is good for me to know how I should reverently and religiously prepare my heart for thee, for the profitable receiving of thy Sacrament, or for the celebrating of so great and divine a Sacrifice.

C H A P. VII.

Of the discussing of our own conscience and purpose of amendment.

The voice of the beloved.

Above all things, the Minister of God ought to come to celebrate, and receive this Sacrament with great humilitie of heart, and lowly reverence, with a full faith, and a pious intending of the honour of God. Examine diligently thy conscience, and to thy power purge and cleanse it with true contrition and humble confession: so as there may be nothing

thing in thee, that may be burdensome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorse of conscience, and hinder thy free access. Repent thee of all thy sins in generall, and in particular bewail and lament thy daily offences. And if thou hast time, confesse unto God in the secret of thy heart, all the evils of thy (disordered) passions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet so carnall, so worldly, so unmortified in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unwatchfull over thy outward senses, so often intangled with many vain fantasies; so vehemently inclined to outward things, so negligent in the interiour; so prone to laughter and immodesty, so indisposed to tears and compunction; so prompt to ease and pleasures of the flesh, so dull to strictnesse of selfe and zeal; so curious to hear news and see glorious sights, so slack to embrace that is humble and low; so covetous of abundance, so niggardly in giving, so fast keeping; so inconsiderate in speech, so unbridled to silence; so loose in manners, so importune in action; so greedy

to meat, so deaf to the word of God; so hasty to rest, so slow to labour; so watchfull to tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hasty to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so cold in Prayer, so undevout in celebrating, so drowsie in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldom wholly gathered into thy self, so suddenly moved to anger, so apt to take displeasure against another, so prone to judge, so severe to reprehend, so joyfull in prosperity, so weak in adversity; so often purposing much good, and yet performing little.

3. These and other thy defects being confessed, and bewailed with sorrow and great dislike of thine own infirmity, make a firm purpose alwayes to amend thy life and to endeavour still after a farther progresse in holinesse. Then with full resignation, and with thy whole will, do thou to the honour of my name, offer up thy self a perpetuall sacrifice on the altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy body and soul unto me, that so thou mayest come worthily to celebrate this Eucharist.

fiticall sacrifice, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For man hath no oblation more worthy, nor greater, for the destroying of sin, then to offer up himself unto God purely and wholly in the holy Communion. And when a man shall have done what lyeth in him, and shall be truly penitent, and shall come to me for pardon and grace, as I live, saith the Lord, who will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, I will not remember his sins any more, but they shall be all forgiven him.

C H A P. VIII.

*Of the oblation of Christ on the Crosse,
and resignation of our selves.*

The voice of the Beloved.

ASI willingly offered up my self unto God my Father for thy sins, my hands being stretched forth on the Crosse, and my body naked, so that nothing remained in me that was not wholly turned to a sacrifice for the appeasing of the di-

vine majesty: so oughtest thou also to offer up thy self willingly unto me every day, as a pure and holy oblation, with all thy might and affections, in as hearty a manner as thou canst. What do I require of thee more, then that thou entirely resign thy self unto me? Whatsoever thou givest besides thy self, is of little account in my sight; for I seek not any gift of thine, but thy self.

2. As it would not suffice thee to have all things whatsoever, besides me; so neither can it please me, whatsoever thou givest, if thou offerest not thy self. Offer up thy self unto me, and give thy self wholly for God, and thy offering shall be acceptable. Behold I offered up my self wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole body and blood for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abidest in thy self, and dost not offer thy self up freely unto my will; thy oblation is not entire, neither will the union between us be perfect. Therefore a free offering up of thy self in to the hands of God, ought to goe before

all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedom and grace. For this cause so few become inwardly free and illuminated, for that they are loth wholly to deny themselves. My saying is undoubtedly true, *Unlesse a man forsake all, he cannot be my Disciple.* If thou therefore desirest to be my Disciple, offer up thy self unto me with thy whole affections.

C H A P. I X.

*That we ought to offer up our selves,
and all that is ours unto God,
and to pray for all.*

The voice of the Disciple.

THine, O Lord, are all things that are in heaven, and in earth. I desire to offer up my self unto thee, as a free oblation, and to remain alwaies thine. O Lord, in the simplicity of my heart I offer my self unto thee this day, for a sacrifice of perpetuall praise, to be thy servant for ever. Receive me with this holy oblation of thy precious body; and may this be for my good and the good of all thy people.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my sins and offences, which I have committed before thee and thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I first could sin, to this hour, upon thy mercifull altar; that thou maist consume and burn them all with the fire of thy love, and wash out all the stains of my finnes, and cleanse my conscience from all offences, and restore to me again thy grace, which I lost by sin, forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully to the kisse of peace.

3. What can I do with my sins, but humbly confesse and bewail them, and intreat alwayes thy favour? I beseech thee, hear me graciously, when I stand before thee my God. All my sins are very displeasing unto me. I will never commit them any more; but I bewail, and will bewail them as long as I live, and am purposed to repent, and according to my utmost power to please thee. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my sins for thy holy names sake: save my soul which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood. Behold I commit my self unto thy mercy,

I

I resigne my self over into thy hands. Do with me according to thy goodnesse, not according to my wickednesse and iniquity.

4. I offer up also unto thee all whatsoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou maist amend and sanctify it, that thou maist make it gratefull and acceptable unto thee; and alwaies perfect it more and more; and bring me also, who am a slothfull and unprofitable creature, to a good and blessed end.

5. I offer up also unto thee all the godly desires of pious persons, the necessities of parents, friends, brethren, sisters, and of all those that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my self or to others for thy love, and that have desired and begd of me to pray for them and all theirs: that they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain; and being freed from all evils, may joyfully give worthy thanks unto thee.

6. I offer up also unto thee my prayers

ers, especially for them who have in any thing wronged, grieved, or slandered me, or have done me any damage or displeasure; and for those also, whom I have at any time sadded, troubled, grieved, and scandalized by words or deeds, wittingly or at unawares: that it may please thee to forgive us all our sins and offences, one against another. Take, O Lord, from our hearts all jealousie, indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatsoever may hurt Charity, and lessen brotherly love. Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on those that crave thy mercy: give grace unto them that stand in need thereof, and grant that we may be counted worthy to enjoy thy grace, and attain to life everlasting, Amen.

C H A P. X.

*That the holy communion is not
lightly to be forborn.*

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest often to have recourse to the Fountain of grace and of divine mercy, to the Fountain of goodnesse

end

and of all benignity; that thou mayst be healed of thy sins and passions, and be made more strong and vigilant against all the temptations and deceits of the Devil. The enemy knowing the great good and advantage which comes by the holy Communion, endeavoureth by all means and occasions to withdraw and hinder faithfull and pious persons from it.

2. Some when they purpose to fit themselves for the holy Communion, suffer worse assaults of the Devil. For that wicked spirit (as it is written in Job) cometh amongst the Sons of God, to trouble them according to his accustomed malice, or to make them over fearfull and perplexed, that so he may diminish their affection, or by subtile assaults take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether forbear the Communion, or at least come unto it but coldly. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and suggestions, be they never so filthy and hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. Thou oughtest to condemn and scorn him a miserable wretch, and
not

not to omit the holy Communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive care for the obtaining such a degree of devotion, and some anxiety about confessing thy sins hindereth thee. Follow here in the counsell of the wise, and put away all doubt and scruple; for it is an hindrance to the grace of God, and prejudiceth the devotion of the mind. For every small vexation and trouble omit not the holy Communion, but the sooner confess thy sins, and willingly forgive others whatsoever offences they have done against thee; and if thou hast offended any humbly crave pardon, and God will readily forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay long the confession of thy sins, or to deferre the holy Communion? Purge thy self with speed, spit out the venome presently, make haste to apply this sovereign remedy, and thou shalt find it to be better with thee, then if thou deferredst it long. If thou omittest it to day for this cause, per-

haps

perhaps to morrow some greater will fall
out; and so thou mayst be hindred a long
time from the Communion, and become
more unfit. With all possible speed shake
off from thy self all present heaviness and
sloth, for it will not avail thee to continue
long in disquietness and trouble of mind,
and for daily occurring impediments to
withdraw thy self from the divine myste-
ries. Yea it is very prejudicial to deferre
the Communion long, for this usually
causeth a greater dullness and undisposed-
ness. Alas, some cold and dissolute peo-
ple do willingly delay confession and de-
ferre the sacred Communion, lest they
should be engaged to the greater watch o-
ver themselves.

5. O how little is their charity and
how weak is their devotion, that so easily
omit the holy Communion! How hap-
py is he and acceptable to God, who so
ordereth his life, and keepeth his consci-
ence in such purity, that he is ready and fit
to communicate every day, if it were con-
venient and might be done without o-
thers taking notice. If one doth sometimes
ab-

abstain out of humility, or by reason of some lawfull impediment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he sheweth. But if it proceedeth of dull slothfullnesse, he must stir himself up, and do what lieth in him; and God will assist his desire for the good will he hath thereto, which God doth chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawfull hinderance doth happen, he must yet alwayes have that good will, and a pious intention to communicate, and so shall he not lose the fruit of the Sacrament. For every good man may every day and hour profitably and without let receive Christ spiritually and yet on certain dayes, and at time appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with an affectionate reverence the body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honour and glory of God, then his own comfort. For he communicateth mystically and is invisibly fed, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the mystery of the Incarnation, and the Passion of Christ and is inflamed with his love.

7. He that prepareth not himself, but when a Festivall draweth near, and when custome compelleth him thereunto: shall usually be found to be unprepared for it. Blessed is he that offereth himself up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Be not too long, nor too short in celebrating but keep the accustomed manner of those with whom thou livest. Thou oughtest not to be tedious and troublesome to others, but to observe the received custome, according to the appointment of thy Superiours: and rather frame thy self to the profit of others, then to thine own devotion or desire.

C H A P. XI.

That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithfull soul.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Sweetest Lord Iesus, how great sweetnesse hath an holy soul that feasteth with thee in thy banquet, where there

there is set no other food to be eaten but thy self, her onely beloved, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart! And verily it should be a sweet thing unto me to pour out tears from the very bottome of my heart in thy presence, and with holy Magdalene to wash thy feet with my tears. But where is this devotion? Where is there any so plentiful shedding of holy tears? Surely in the sight of thee and thy holy Angels, my whole heart should be inflamed and even weep for joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sacrament truly present, though hidden under another representation.

2. For to behold thee in thine own divine brightnesse, mine eyes would not be able to endure it, neither could the whole world stand in the brightnesse of the glory of thy majesty. I do really enjoy and adore him, whom the Angels adore in heaven; but I, as yet in the mean time, by faith, they by sight, and without a veile. I ought to be content with the light of true faith, and to walk therein, untill the day of everlasting brightnesse
break

break forth, and the shadows of figures passe away. But when that shall come which is perfect, the use of Sacraments shall cease. For the Blessed in heavenly glory need not any Sacramentall remedy, but rejoyce without end in the presence of God, beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed from glory to glory into the image of the incomprehensible Deity, they tast the Word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning, and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whilest I mind these wonderfull things, even all spirituall comfort whatsoever becometh tedious unto me: for that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no account at all of whatsoever I see or hear in this world. Thou art my witnesse, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no creature can give me rest, but thou my God, whom I desire to behold everlastingly. But this is not possible whilst I remain in this mortall life. Therefore I must frame my self to much patience, and submit my self to thee in all my desires. For thy Saints
also,

also, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdome of heaven, whilst they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe: what they hoped for, I also hope for: whither they are come, I trust I shall come by thy grace. In the mean time, I will go forward in faith, strengthened by the examples of the Saints: I have also godly books for my comfort and for the glasse of my life; and above all these, thy most holy Body for a singular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceive two things to be chiefly necessary for me in this life, without which this miserable life would be unsupportable unto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this body, I acknowledge my self to stand in need of two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast therefore given unto me a weak creature, thy sacred Body for the nourishment of my soul and body; and thou hast set thy word as a light unto my feet: without these two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the soul, and thy Sacrament,

ment, the bread of life. These also may be called the two tables set on the one side and the other, in the store-house of the holy Church. One is the holy table having the holy bread, that is, the precious body of Christ: the other is that of the divine law, containing holy doctrine, teaching the true faith, and certainly leading to that within the veil, where is the Holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee Lord Iesus, the light of everlasting light, for the table of holy doctrine, which thou hast afforded us by thy servants, the Prophets and Apostles and other Teachers.

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creatour and Redeemer of man, who to manifest thy love to the whole world, hast prepared a great supper, wherein thou hast set before us to be eaten (not the typicall Lamb, but) thine own most sacred Body and Bloud, rejoycing all the faithfull with thy holy banquet, & replenishing them to the full with thy cup of salvation, in which are all the delights of Paradise; and the holy Angels do feast with us, but yet with a more happy sweetnesse.

6. O how great and honourable is the office of Gods Ministers, to whom it is given with sacred words to consecrate (the Sacrament of) the Lord of glory; with their lips to blesse, with their hands to hold, with their mouth to receive, and also to administer to others! O how clean ought to be those hands, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unspotted that heart, where the Authour of purity so often entreth! Nothing but what is holy, no word but good and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, which so often receiveth the Sacrament of Christ.

7. Simple and chaste ought to be the eyes that use to behold the body of Christ, the hands pure and lifted up to heaven, that use to receive the Creatour of heaven and earth. Unto the Priests especially it is said in the Law, Be ye holy, for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Assist us, Almighty God, with thy grace, that we, who have undertaken the office of Priesthood, may serve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with

a good conscience. And if we live not in so great innocency as we ought to do, grant us notwithstanding in due manner to bewail the sins which we have committed; and in the spirit of humility and with the full purpose of a good will to serve thee hereafter more fervently.

C H A P. XII.

That he who is to communicate ought to prepare himself with great diligence.

The voice of the Beloved.

I Am the lover of purity, and the giver of all sanctity. I seek a pure heart, and there is the place of my rest. Make ready and adorn for me the great chamber, and I will keep with thee the Passeeover amongst my Disciples. If thou wilt have me come unto thee, and remain with thee; purge out the old leaven, and make clean the habitation of thy heart: shut out the whole world, and all the throng of sins: sit like a sparrow solitary upon the house-top, and think of thy offences in the bitterness of thy soul. For

every lover prepareth the best and fairest room for his beloved: and herein is known the affection of him that entertaineth his beloved.

2. Know thou notwithstanding, that the merit of no action of thine is able to make this preparation sufficient, although thou shouldest prepare thy self a whole year together, and think on nothing else. Thou art of my mere grace and favour suffered to come to my table, like a begger invited to dinner to a rich man, who hath nothing else to return him for his benefits, but to humble himself and give him thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custome, nor for necessity, but with fear and reverence, and affection; receive the body of thy beloved Lord God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee, I have commanded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee: come and receive me.

3. When I bestow the grace of devotion, give thanks to thy God; for it is given thee, not for that thou art worthy, but
be-

because I have mercy on thee. If thou have it not, but rather dost feel thy self dry; continue in prayer, sigh and knock, and give not over untill thou art meet to receive some crum or drop of saving grace. Thou hast need of me, not I of thee; neither comest thou to sanctifie me, but I come to sanctify and make thee better. Thou comest that thou mayst be sanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou mayst receive new grace, & be stirred up again to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy heart with all diligence, and receive thy beloved into thy soul.

4. But thou oughtest not onely to prepare thy self to devotion before Communion, but carefully also to conserve thy self therein, after thou hast received the Sacrament. Neither is the carefull guard of thy self afterwards lesse required, then devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the best preparation again for the obtaining of greater grace; because that a man becometh therefore very indisposed, if he presently poure him-

self out overmuch to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in some secret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou hast him, whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughtest wholly to give thy self, that so thou mayst live hereafter, not in thy self, but in me, without all solicitude.

C H A P. XIII.

That a devout soul ought to desire with her whole heart, to be united unto Christ in the Sacrament.

The voice of the Disciple.

HOW may I obtain this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole heart unto thee, and enjoy thee as my soul desireth? And that no man may look towards me, nor any creature move me or eye me, but thou alone mayst speak unto me, and I to thee, as the beloved is wont to speak to his beloved, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I desire, that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my heart

heart from all created things, and more and more, by sacred Communion and often celebrating, learn to relish heavenly and eternall things. O Lord God, when shall I be wholly united to thee, & absorpt by thee, and be altogether forgetfull of my self! Thou in me, and I in thee, and so grant us both to continue in one.

2. Thou art truly my beloved, the choicest amongst thousands, in whom my soul is well pleased to dwell all the dayes of her life. Thou art indeed my peacemaker, in whom is greatest peace and true rest, without whom is labour & sorrow and infinite misery. Thou art indeed a God that hidest thy self, and thy counsell is not with the wicked, but thy speech is with the humble and simple of heart. O Lord, how sweet is thy spirit, who to the end thou mightest shew thy sweetnesse towards thy children, vouchsafest to feed them with the bread which descendeth from heaven, and is full of all sweetnesse! Surely there is no other Nation so great, that hath God nigh unto them, as thou our God art present to all

thy faithfull ones, unto whom for their daily comfort, and for the raising up of their hearts to heaven, thou givest thy self to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other nation is there so famous, as the Christian people? or what creature under heaven so beloved, as a religious soul, to whom God himself cometh to feed her with his glorious flesh? O unspeakable grace! O admirable condescent! O infinite love singularly bestowed upon man! But what shall I give unto the Lord in return of his grace, for so eminent an expression of thy love? There is no other thing more acceptable that I am able to give, then to give my heart wholly to my God, & to unite it most inwardly unto him. Then shall all my inward parts rejoyce, when my soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me; If thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, & I will gladly be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto thee.

C H A P. XIV.

*of the fervent desire of some devout persons
to receive the Body of Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

O How great is thy goodnesse O Lord, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! When I remember some devout persons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord, with greatest devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded and blush within my self that I come so formally and coldly to thy Table of the holy Communion, that I remain so dry, and without heart-affection, that I am not wholly inflamed in thy presence, my God, nor so earnestly drawn and affected, as many devout persons have been, who out of a vehement desire of the Communion, and a feeling affection of heart, could not contain themselves from weeping; but with the desire both of soul and body, they earnestly longed after thee, O God the living Fountain, being not otherwise able to allay nor satisfy their hun-

hunger, but by receiving thy body with all joy and spirituall greedinesse.

2. O the most ardent faith of those persons! a clear argument of thy sacred presence. For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose heart burneth so mightily within them, whilest thou, O blessed Jesus, conversest with them. Such desire and devotion, so vehement love and fervency, is oftentimes far from me. Be mercifull unto me good Jesus, sweet and gracious Lord, and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feel sometimes, at least in this holy Communion, somewhat of thy hearty affectionate love, that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodnesse increased, and that my charity once perfectly enflamed, after the tasting of heavenly Manna, may never decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I desire, and to visit me most mercifully with the spirit of fervour, when it shall please thee. For although I burn not with so great desire as those that are so singularly devored to thee: yet
not-

Notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying & craving that I may participate with all such thy fervent lovers, and be numbred among them in their holy company.

C H A P. X V.

That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantly, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently and with confidence, to receive it gratefully, to keep it dumbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the term and manner of this heavenly visitation to God, untill it shall please him to come unto thee. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion, and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately. God often giveth in a short moment, that which he hath long time denied: he giveth sometimes

times in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be alwaies presently given, and at hand ever with a wish, the weak man could not well bear it. Therefore the grace of devotion is to be expected with good hope & humble patience, yet impute it to thy self and thy sins, when it is not given thee, or when it is secretly taken away. It is sometimes a small matter that hindereth and hideth grace [from us,] if yet it be to be called small, and not rather a great matter, that hindereth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt have thy desire.

3. For presently as soon as thou from thy whole heart givest thy self to God, and seekest not this nor that, for thine own pleasure or will, but settlest thy self wholly in him; thou shalt find thy self united and quiet: for nothing will relish so well, and please thee so much, as the good pleasure of the divine will. Whosoever therefore, with a single heart lifteth up his intention to God, and purgeth himself from all inordi-

ordinate love or dislike of any created thing, he shall be the most fit to receive grace, and meet for the gift of devotion: for the Lord bestoweth his blessings here, where he findeth the vessels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forsaketh these low things, and the more he dieth to himself by contempt of himself: so much the more speedily grace shall come, and enter in more plentifully, and raise up higher the heart that is thus free.

4. Then shall he see, and be filled, and wonder, and his heart shall be enlarged within him; because the hand of the Lord is with him, and he hath put himself wholly into his hands for ever. Behold, so shall the man be blessed, that seeketh God with his whole heart, and busieth not his soul in vain. This man obtaineth the great favour of divine union, in receiving the holy Eucharist; for that he respecteth not his own devotion and comfort, but above all devotion and comfort, the honour and glory of God.

C H A P. XVI.

*That we ought to manifest our necessities
Christ, and crave his grace.*

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet, & loving Lord, whom
I now desire to receive with all devo-
tion, thou knowest my infirmity, & the ne-
cessity which I endure, with how many
sins and evils I am oppressed, how often
I am grieved, tempted, troubled, & defiled.
I come unto thee for remedy, I crave
of thee comfort and succour; I speak to him
that knoweth all things, to whom all my
inward parts are open, & who can onely
perfectly comfort and help me. Thou
knowest what good things I stand in most
need of, and how poor I am in virtues.

2. Behold, I stand before thee poor
and naked, calling for grace, and craving
mercy. Refresh thy hungry beggar, in-
flame my coldnesse with the fire of thy
love: enlighten my blindnesse with the
brightnesse of thy presence. Turn all
earthly things to me into bitternesse, all
things

things grievous and crosse into patience,
all low and created things into contempt
and oblivion. Lift up my heart to thee in
heaven, and suffer me not to wander upon
earth. Be thou onely sweet unto me from
henceforth for evermore: for thou one-
ly art my meat and my drink, my love
and my joy, my sweetnesse and all my
good.

3. O that with thy presence, thou
wouldst wholly inflame, burn and con-
form me unto thy self; that I might be
made one spirit with thee by the grace of
inward union, and by the meltings of ar-
dent love! Suffer me not to go from thee
hungry and dry, but deal mercifully with
me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt won-
derfully with thy Saints. What marvell is
it if I should be wholly enflamed by thee,
and die from my self, sith thou art fire al-
waies burning and never decaying, love
purifying the heart, and enlightning the
understanding?

C H A P. XVII.

*Of fervent love and vehement desire
to receive Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

With great devotion & ardent love, with most hearty affection and fervour I desire to receive thee, O Lord, as many Saints and devout persons have desired thee, when they received thy Sacrament, who were most pleasing unto thee in holiness of life, and most fervent in devotion. O my God, my everlasting love, my whole good, my happiness without end, I would gladly receive thee with the most vehement desire, and most worthy reverence, that any of the Saints ever had, or could feel.

2. And although I be unworthy to have all those feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had all those highly pleasing, inflamed desires: yea and whatsoever also an holy mind can conceive and desire, all that, with greatest reverence and most inward affection, I offer and present unto thee.

thee. I desire to reserve nothing to my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and all mine unto thee, my Lord God, my Creatour, and my Redeemer. I desire to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise and honour, with such gratitude, worthinesse, and love, with such faith, hope, and purity, as thy most holy Mother the glorious Virgin Mary received, and desired thee, when she humbly and devoutly answered the Angel, who declared unto her the mystery of the Incarnation, and said, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word.*

3. And as thy blessed Forerunner, the most excellent amongst the Saints, John Baptist, chearfully leaped by reason of the joy of the holy Ghost, whilest he was yet shut up in his mothers wombe; and afterwards seeing Iesus walking amongst men, humbling himself very much, said with devout affection, *The friend of the Bridegroom that standeth and heareth him, rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegroom:* so I also wish to be inflamed with

great and holy desires, and to offer my self up to thee with my whole heart. Wherefore I offer also and present unto thee the joyes, fervent affections, mentall excesses and supernall illuminations, and heavenly visions of all devout hearts, with all the virtues and praises celebrated and to be celebrated by all creatures in heaven and earth, for my self, and all such as are commended to me in prayer, that by all thou maist be worthily praised and glorified for ever.

4. Receive, my Lord God, my wishes and desires of giving the infinite praise and thanks, which according to the measure of thy unspeakable greatnesse, are most worthily due unto thee. These I yield thee, and desire to yield thee every day and moment, I do entreat and invite all heavenly minds, and all thy devout servants, to give thanks and praises together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, & Tongues praise thee, and magnifie thy holy and sweet name, with great joy & fervent devotion; and let all that reverently and de-

joyfully celebrate thy most high Sacrament and receive it with full faith, finde grace and mercie at thy hands, and pray humbly for me a sinfull creature. And when they shall have obtained their desired devotion and joyfull union, & depart from thy sacred heavenly Table, well comforted and marvellously refreshed, let them vouchsafe to remember my poor soul.

C H A P. XVIII.

That man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense to faith.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not be plunged in the depths of doubts. He that is a searcher of Majesty, shall be oppressed by the glory. God is able to work more then man can understand. A pious and humble inquiry of truth is tolerable,

nable, so it be alwaies readie to be taught, and do endeavour to walk in the sound doctrines of the Fathers.

2. Blessed is that simplicitie, that forsaketh the difficult waies of questions, and goeth on in the plain and assured path of Gods Commandments. Many have lost devotion, whilst they would search after high things. Faith and a sincere life are required at thy hands, not height of understanding, nor a diving deep into the mysteries of God. If thou doest not understand, nor conceive those things that are under thee, how shalt thou be able to comprehend those that are above thee? Submit thy self to God, and let thy sense be subject to faith; and the light of knowledge shall be given thee in that degree as shall be profitable and necessarie for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted about faith and the Sacrament, but this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the Enemy. Be not thou anxious nor dispute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give answer to the doubts cast in by the Devil, but believe the words of God, believe his

Saints

Saints and Prophets, and the wicked Enemy will flie from thee. It is oftentimes very profitable to the servant of God to suffer such things. For the Devill tempteth not unbelievers and sinners, whom he already securely possesseth, but he sundry waies tempteth and vexeth the faithfull and religious.

4. Go forward therefore with a sincere and undoubted faith, and come to the Sacrament with unfeigned reverence. And whatsoever thou art not able to understand, commit securely to Almighty God. God deceiveth thee not; he is deceived that trusteth too much to himself. God walketh with the simple, revealeth himself to the humble, giveth understanding to the little ones, openeth the sense to pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reason is weak, and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reason and naturall search ought to follow faith, not to go before it, nor infringe it. For faith and love do here chiefly excell, and work in a hidden manner

in this most holy and excellent Sacrament. God, who is everlasting and of infinite power, doth great and inscrutable things in heaven and in earth, and there is no searching out of his wonderfull works. If the works of God were such, as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderfull and unspeakable.

F I N I S.

The Contents of the Chapters.

The first Book.

CHAP. I.

O F the imitation of Christ, and contempt of all worldly vanities. pag. 1.	1.
Of the humble conceit of our selves.	3.
Of the doctrine of Truth.	6.
Of wisdom and providence in our actions.	10
Of the reading of holy Scriptures.	11
Of inordinate affections.	12
Of flying vain hope and pride.	13
That too much familiarity is to be shunned.	15
Of obedience and subjection.	16
Of avoiding superfluity in words.	18
Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous desire of profiting in grace.	19
Of the profit of adversity.	22
Of resisting temptations.	24
Of avoiding rash judgement.	28
Of works done of Charity.	30
Of bearing with the defects of others.	31
Of a retired life.	33
Of the examples of the holy Fathers.	35
	Of

The Contents.

<i>Of the exercise of a good and religious person</i>	38
<i>Of the love of solitude and silence.</i>	43
<i>Of compunction of heart.</i>	48
<i>Of the Consideration of humane misery.</i>	51
<i>Of the meditation of Death.</i>	56
<i>Of judgement, & the punishment of Sins.</i>	61
<i>Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.</i>	66

The second Book.

CHAP. I.

<i>Of the inward life.</i>	73
<i>Of humble submission.</i>	78
<i>Of a good and peaceable man.</i>	78
<i>Of a pure mind, and upright intention.</i>	82
<i>Of the consideration of ones self.</i>	83
<i>Of the joy of a good conscience.</i>	84
<i>Of the love of Iesus above all things.</i>	88
<i>Of familiar conversation with Iesus.</i>	90
<i>Of the want of all comfort.</i>	93
<i>Of thankfullness for the grace of God.</i>	98
<i>How few the lovers of the Croſs of Chriſt are.</i>	101
<i>Of the high way of the Holy Croſs.</i>	104
<i>The</i>	The

The Contents.

The third Book.

CHAP. I.

- Of the inward speech of Christ unto a faithful soul.* 114
- That Truth speaketh inwardly without noise of words.* 115
- That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.* 117
- That we ought to live in truth and humility before God.* 121
- Of the wonderfull effect of divine love.* 124
- Of the proof of a true Lover.* 129
- That grace is to be hid under the vail of humility.* 132
- Of a mean conceit of our selves in the sight of God.* 136
- That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.* 138
- That the world being despised, it is a sweet thing to serve God.* 140
- That the desires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.* 143
- Of Patience, and of striving against concupiscence.* 145

The Contents.

- Of the humble obedience of a subject, according to the example of Christ.* 148
- Of the secret judgements of God to be considered, lest we be extolled in our good deeds.* 150
- How we are to stand affected, and what we are to say, in every thing which we desire.* 153
- That true comfort is to be sought in God alone.* 155
- That all our care is to be placed in God.* 157
- That temporall miseries, after the example of Christ, must be borne patiently.* 159
- Of suffering of injuries: and who is proved to be truly patient.* 161
- Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities: and of the miseries of this life.* 164
- That we are to rest in God above all his gifts and benefits.* 167
- Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.* 171
- Of four things that bring much peace.* 175
- Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.* 178
- VVherein the firm peace of the heart, and true spirituall profiting consisteth?* 180
- of

The Contents.

- Of the excellency of a free mind, which
humble Prayer sooner gaineth then Rea-
ding.* 182
- That private love most hindereth from the
chiefest Good.* 184
- Against the tongues of Slanderers.* 187
- How we ought to call upon God, and blesse
him when tribulation draweth near.* 188
- Of craving the divine aid, and confidence
of recovering grace.* 190
- Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out
the Creatour.* 194
- Of deniall of our selves, and forsaking all
inordinate desires.* 197
- Of inconstancy of heart, and of directing
our finall intentions unto God.* 199
- That God is sweet, above all things, and in
all things, to him that loveth.* 201
- That there is no security from temptation in
this life.* 204
- Against the vain judgements of men.* 207
- Of a full and pure resignation of our selves,
for the obtaining freedome of heart.* 208
- Of good government in outward things, of
recourse to God in dangers.* 210
- That a man be not over-earnest in his
aff-*

The Contents.

<i>affairs.</i>	212
<i>That man hath no good of himself, nor any thing whereof he can glory.</i>	213
<i>Of the contempt of all temporall honours.</i>	216
<i>That our peace is not to be placed in men.</i>	217
<i>Against vain and secular knowledge.</i>	219
<i>Of not drawing outward things to our selves.</i>	222
<i>That credit is not to be given to all men: and how prone man is to offend in words.</i>	223
<i>Of putting our trust in God when evil words arise.</i>	227
<i>That all grievous things are to be endured for life everlasting.</i>	230
<i>Of the everlasting day, and shortnesse of this life.</i>	233
<i>Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those that fight valiantly.</i>	237
<i>How a disconsolate person ought to offer himself into the hand of God.</i>	243
<i>That a man ought to imploy himself in works of Humility, when strength is wanting for higher employments.</i>	248
<i>That</i>	

The Contents.

- 12 That a man ought to esteem himself not
23 worthy of comfort, but rather to deserve
3 stripes. 249
6 That the grace of God doth not joyne it self
7 with those that savour of earthly
9 things. 252
r Of the different motions of Nature and
2 Grace. 255
d Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy
of divine Grace. 261
l That we ought to denie our selves, and imi-
tate Christ by the Cross. 265
y That a man be not too much dejected, when
he falleth into some defects. 268
y Of not searching into high matters, and in-
to the secret judgements of God. 270
That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in
God alone. 259

THE

The Contents.

The Fourth Book.

C H A P. I.

*With how great reverence Christ ought to
be received.* 281

*That the great goodnesse and love of God is
exhibited to man in this Sacrament.* 289

That it is profitable to communicate often.
293.

*That many benefits are bestowed upon them
that communicate devoutly.* 297

*Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Mi-
nisterial function.* 301

*An interrogation of the exercise before
Communion.* 303

*Of the discussing of our own conscience and
purpose of amendment.* 304

*Of the oblation of Christ on the Croſſ, and
resignation of our selves,* 307

*That we ought to offer up our selves, and
all that is ours unto God, and to pray for
all.* 309

*That the holy communion is not lightly to be
forborn.* 312

*That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scri-
ptures, are most necessary unto a faithful
soul.* 317

That

The Contents.

- That he who is to communicate ought to prepare himself with great diligence.* 323
- That a devout soul ought to desire with her whole heart, to be united unto Christ in the Sacrament.* 326
- Of the fervent desire of some devout persons to receive the Body of Christ.* 329
- That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.* 331
- That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.* 334
- Of fervent love and vehement desire to receive Christ.* 336
- That man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense to faith.* 339

F I N I S.